

# Surgical Lead Volunteer

Terms of Reference

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## *Surgical Lead Volunteer, DRC*

### **Volunteer Brief and Terms of Reference**

#### **Summary**

KGHP is looking for a lead volunteer to support King's Global Health Partnerships (KGHP) in its safe surgery programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The volunteer will have a background in surgery, anaesthesia or perioperative care and will lead activities to strengthen local health worker capacity on safe surgery. The volunteer will be required to travel to the DRC for the delivery of training and building relationships with partners. This is a fantastic opportunity for a volunteer interested in global health with experience in surgery and LMICs settings to be involved in an exciting new project in the DRC.

#### **King's Global Health Partnerships**

King's Global Health Partnerships (KGHP) works with health facilities, academic institutions, and governments to strengthen health systems and improve the quality of care in four countries: Somaliland, Sierra Leone, the DRC and Zambia. We bring together health, academic and international development expertise from King's College London, the UK's National Health Service (NHS) and our international partners to:

- Educate, train and support healthcare workers
- Strengthen healthcare and training institutions
- Enhance national health policies and systems.

Our programmes are delivered by volunteers, with educators, researchers, health professionals, managers and health sector leaders taking up volunteering placements to deliver technical advice, teaching, training, and distance mentoring and on the job support to their counterparts in the global south.

#### **King's Kongo Central Partnership**

KGHP has been working in the DRC to help strengthen the health system and improve the quality of care since 2013. We work in the Kongo Central province, in the southwest of the country where there is a high burden of trauma due to road traffic collisions on the arterial route connecting the Atlantic port cities of Boma and Matadi with the capital Kinshasa. We work with our partners to provide education and training of healthcare workers, and to strengthen the trauma system, clinical services, policy and research. Key partners include the provincial Ministry of Health and Education, the Hôpital Provincial de Référence de Kinkanda (Matadi) and the Université Joseph Vubu (Boma). These institutions provide services for a population of 6 million.

## Context

Surgery is an integral component of a functioning healthcare system. In Kongo Central province, most of the population lacks access to safe, timely and affordable surgery. For patients who are able to access surgical care, peri-operative mortality and complications are high and outcomes are poor. The barriers to accessing safe surgery in Kongo Central include: the risk of financial hardship for patients, the lack of a trained healthcare workforce, poor infrastructure and equipment, weak strategic leadership and limited use of data to improve health service delivery. The four main tertiary hospitals in the province employ experienced surgical staff, but there is only one full time post-graduate trained surgeon for the province. These hospitals rely heavily on medical officers without postgraduate surgical training for the delivery of emergency surgical care. With limited specialist expertise concentrated in large urban centres, safe surgical care is out of reach for the rural population, who are often the poorest in society. In the district health centres, non-specialist staff, such as recently qualified doctors, nurses and midwives, routinely conduct procedures like C-sections, laparotomies, wound closures, and management of open fractures with little or no supervision. The current lack of capacity at district health centres has a negative impact on the effectiveness of the health system.

We have recently started a two-year project that aims to improve surgical outcomes for rural and urban communities in Kongo Central province. The project is delivered in partnership with the provincial Ministry of Health and will tackle barriers to safe surgery at multiple levels of the health system. At provincial level, it works with the Health Division to increase capacity for leadership, strategic planning and management of surgical data; At tertiary level it works with four hospitals to strengthen communication and coordination with district hospitals; and at district level it will improve the knowledge skills and confidence of health workers in four facilities on safe surgery.

A cohort of health workers- nurses, doctors and allied health professionals- across the four main hospitals in the province has been trained in the [WHO Safer Surgery Saves Lives](#) initiative, which comprises a number of tools including WHO guidelines for Safe Surgery and the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist. Using a Training of Trainers approach, involving those previously trained, we will upskill non-specialists at the district level. They will learn to improve infection prevention and control (through appropriate gloving and gowning procedures, hand washing, the proper sterilisation of equipment, antimicrobial stewardship), deliver safe anaesthetic care (promoting use of pulse oximetry and patient monitoring) and improve theatre practice (promoting use of the WHO checklist, swab counts). We will also support a mentorship programme between health care workers working across the eight implementation sites.

## Aim

The lead surgical volunteer will be responsible for leading the surgical teaching and mentoring component of this programme, with support from the partnership and other volunteers. This will include travelling to DRC to deliver and supervise health worker training.

## Objectives

Lead the surgical component of this programme by:

- Reviewing WHO Safe Surgery Saves Lives training package material to ensure these are up –to- date, context appropriate and follow sound pedagogical approaches for the topics covered.
- Adapting training package for delivery of a Training of Trainers course to a multidisciplinary cohort of health workers from the four main tertiary hospitals
- Travel to DRC to deliver Training of Trainers (ToT) on Safe Surgical Practices across four tertiary hospitals (estimated 30 participants at each site). The ToT will be based on the WHO Safe Surgery Saves Lives programme and will include coaching and mentorship skills that will equip tertiary health workers with the necessary skills to cascade the training to district health workers.
- Support the establishment of a mentorship programme through which health workers are supported as they cascade learning to district hospitals in the months following the ToT.
- Support partnership with evidence gathering of impact of programme during trip to DRC.
- Provide technical expertise in planned activities, including advice on investments needed in surgical infrastructure.
- Work with health data management lead volunteer to support health data management component of programme, including reviewing existing health data management processes and tools and advising partnership on use of surgical data for strengthening surgical care at the facility and provincial level.
- Leading group of volunteers that support this programme of work, by coordinating inputs and contributions to activities.

## Timing

The project will run from March 2022 to March 2024. We are looking for someone who can engage with the project immediately and travel in September 2022 for one or two weeks to the DRC. Suggested trip dates are 10<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> September, we would like to hear from volunteers who are able to travel close to these dates and for shorter periods of time, so please note your availability in your application.

## Skills and experience

- **Qualifications:** Appropriate medical or allied health professional degree. Post-graduate training in surgery, anaesthesia or emergency desirable but not essential. Diploma in tropical medicine desirable but not essential.
- **Experience:**
  - **Essential:**
    - Surgical, anaesthetic or obstetric care provider (surgeon, doctor, nurse, nurse specialist, operating department practitioner, anaesthetic nurse).
    - Spoken French.
    - Experience of working in a low-resource setting.

- **Desirable:**
  - Surgical, anaesthetic or ED experience and skills.
  - Experience of delivering workshops, training and/or capacity building, ideally in LMICs.
  - Experience of implementing quality improvement projects.
  - Familiar with WHO Safe Surgery Saves Lives Programme

## Expectations

The volunteer lead will work in partnership across all activities. The volunteer will be expected to lead this piece of work, possibly leading other volunteers supporting the programme, coordinating inputs and contributions and working closely with a health data management lead volunteer that will be leading the data management component of the programme. There is a strong emphasis on learning from and working with the healthcare workers in facilities, collaboratively designing solutions and training packages which are appropriate for the environment. All volunteers that participate in our programmes are expected to attend an induction and read the volunteer handbook. Volunteers will be supported to develop objectives for the engagement, which will include objectives for their own professional and personal development. Volunteers are expected to document the work that they deliver for the partnership and will be supported to do so in the form of logs or reports. Lastly, the volunteer lead will be supported by King's Global Health Partnership's team in the UK and in DRC with operations, logistics, financial and project management support.

## Our offer to you

You will have the opportunity to work as part of a dynamic team and contribute to improving health outcomes for a population in need. In addition, there is strong evidence that health partnerships like ours do not only benefit people in low-resource settings. They also bring real benefit to NHS staff and services as well as citizens in our partner countries. Among others, these benefits include the opportunity to develop:

- Leadership skills
- Skills in interdisciplinary team working
- Knowledge and skills in innovation and quality improvement
- Clinical and teaching experience
- Cross-cultural experience
- Personal resilience and efficiency

Volunteers on short term trips and longer placements will receive additional support which is listed below. Please note these are not applicable to all placements, so please make sure you clarify any expectations with the London team:

- Pre-departure and in-country induction
- Cost of return flights covered by KGHP
- Cost of visa covered by KGHP
- Cost of vaccinations and antimalarials covered by KGHP
- Enrolment onto King's College London Travel Insurance policy
- Food, accommodation and travel whilst in the DRC

## Application

All volunteer roles are appointed following an application and interview process, scheduled for a few days after the application deadline. If you are interested in applying, please complete the online application form and submit a C.V. under the “Apply” tab on our Global Volunteering Scheme web page: [www.kcl.ac.uk/kghp/volunteering](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/kghp/volunteering). The deadline for applications is 23:59 at 24/07/2022

Thank you for your interest in King's Global Health Partnerships.

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