

UNICEF (Kenya)

Information Interview with Maternal and Newborn Child (MNCH) Health Officer

Personal Work Experience: Completed undergraduate degree in Environmental Sciences from Moi University (Kenya) in 2007. Number of short courses covering topics such as monitoring & evaluation, global health and issues in international public health which included a number of online MOOCs as well as sponsored face-to-face courses by Save the Children (in collaboration with The Open University) and Kenya Medical Research Institute (in collaboration with UC Berkeley). After undergraduate worked across a number of organisations and job roles;

- Health Graduate Intern at World Vision (2007-2008)
- Volunteer at Kenya Red Cross (2009-2010)
- HIV&AIDS Response Officer at World Vision (2010-2013)
- Public Health Technical Specialist at Save the Children (2013-2015)
- Maternal and Newborn Child Health Officer at UNICEF (2015-now)

Currently completing Masters in International Public Health from the University of Liverpool (Distance Learning) (2014-2017)

Average day in the job: Technical assistance to governmental and partners in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of program activities to accelerate key maternal, newborn and child health interventions, including in emergencies. Support development of country annual work plans and review/update country integrated development. Support coordination of the Community Health Strategy Technical Working Group and ensure effective and efficient scale-up of community strategy through mapping, recruitment, and training of community health workers.

Skills that are essential for a job in global health:

1. Analytical – with so much information it is important to know how to make sense of it, and use it for the best course of action. Not just problem analysis but also data analysis.
2. Flexibility – need to be able to adjust to new things and always look out for new advancements in public health
3. Communication – being able to communicate what you need with your partners and key stakeholders, especially in the UN.
4. Networking – important to build networks and maintain relationships as you always need to work in teams and bring in players to help achieve project goals.
5. Technical knowledge – understand where the gaps are and how to prioritise key areas for action e.g. cost-effective analysis calculations.

General pieces of advice: Decide what area / skill you are passionate about, focus on that and build on that over time and gain experience. Pick out the organisations in the field (choose what type of organization you would like to work for) and get involved with them on a volunteer basis first, and make your way up. Remain open-minded and consider all opportunities. Mentorship is valuable so keep eyes open for opportunities for a mentor who could guide you in your career.

UNICEF UNICEF have a number of volunteer, internship, young professional and entry-level roles available on a rolling basis. Check the website for more details. Offices worldwide.

Website: <https://www.unicef.org/about/employ/>