



Construction Officer

ONSITE

KIRIBATI

GENERAL INFORMATION

Host Entity:	UNICEF KIR
Country of Assignment:	Kiribati
Duty station:	Kiritimati
Volunteer type:	International
Volunteer category:	Specialist UCoS to Mar2026
Duration benefits:	Long-term
Work location:	UN Premises
Work arrangement:	Full-time
Number of Assignment(s):	1
Expected Start Date:	02/03/2026
Duration:	9 month(s)
Possibility of Extension:	Yes
Sustainable Development Goal:	6. Clean water and sanitation
DoA ID:	1784888021266759

DETAILS

ORGANISATION MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work to translate that commitment into practical action, especially for the most disadvantaged children. In the Pacific we work in Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu: These 14 Pacific island countries are home to 2.3 million people, including 1.2 million children and youth, living on more than 660 islands and atolls stretching across 17.2 million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean, an area comparable to the combined size of the United States of America and Canada. Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu are classified as Fragile States according to World Bank/OECD criteria. All 14 Pacific island countries have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but only a third are on track with reporting obligations.

ASSIGNMENT CONTEXT

In the Pacific, UNICEF operates in 14 island countries: the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. These countries collectively comprise more than 660 islands and atolls spread across approximately 17.2 million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean—an area comparable in size to the United States and Canada combined. Together, they are home to approximately 2.3 million people, including around 1.2 million children and young people.

Kiribati is classified as a fragile context under the World Bank and OECD criteria and faces persistent development challenges, compounded by geographic isolation, climate change, water scarcity and sanitation vulnerabilities.

Access to safe sanitation remains a critical public health and child well-being priority in Kiribati, particularly in Kiritimati, Teraina and Tabuaeran, where large-scale household toilet construction is underway under the leadership of the Ministry of Line and Phoenix Islands Development (MLPID), with support from UNICEF. While significant progress has been made, 2026 has been identified as a key year to achieve full sanitation coverage for households, schools and health-care facilities on Kiritimati, and to complete WASH construction in five schools and four health-care facilities in Teraina and Tabuaeran.

Under the overall guidance of the Construction Engineer, routine quality assurance and on-site supervision are required at multiple stages of construction in Teraina and Tabuaeran. However, due to the number and geographic spread of construction sites, it is not feasible for the Construction Engineer and WASH staff based in Kiritimati, Tarawa and Suva to provide regular field monitoring and technical oversight for all projects.

The Construction Officer position is therefore proposed to support quality assurance for WASH construction works and to ensure compliance with national construction standards and government requirements. The role requires specialised expertise in the Pacific and Kiribati context, climate-resilient infrastructure, civil engineering principles, and infrastructure assessment, including structural design.

TASK DESCRIPTION

Under the supervision of the WASH Specialist and the Construction Engineer, or their designated representatives, the Construction Officer will:

i. Project supervision, coordination and design support

Collaborate with the UNICEF WASH Section and with Government/MLPID and island council counterparts to support construction project supervision and management. Provide technical assistance to programme sections through involvement in construction project proposals, planning and preparation of relevant terms of reference; analyse the project context and propose appropriate implementation modalities.

In collaboration with Government, island-level and community counterparts, develop and produce innovative, cost-effective and climate-resilient construction designs using locally available materials, and compile and regularly update a repository of best practices in construction and building design.

Participate in steering and technical coordination meetings, prepare presentations on project progress, and undertake site visits and follow-up actions related to project implementation and monitoring.

ii. Quality assurance and reporting

Provide the WASH Section with regular information on project quality assurance and progress, and take appropriate actions to address technical issues and constraints. Draft relevant sections of project reports, including inputs for management and annual reports, as required.

iii. Preparation of design and technical documentation

Prepare scopes of work based on programme requirements, available budgets and site constraints, and define deliverables and payment modalities. Apply UNICEF and Government norms and standards to construction projects, taking into account local environmental conditions and available materials, and determine whether compliance with green building standards is required.

Review and verify construction documentation, including design drawings, technical specifications and bills of quantities, to ensure they are clear, complete and compliant with programme requirements, construction standards, climate-resilient, eco-efficiency and accessibility requirements. Undertake the necessary actions to secure endorsement of technical documents by relevant ministries.

Follow up with design firms and relevant Government entities to obtain all permits and approvals required prior to commencement of construction works at each location.

iv. Monitoring and contract implementation of construction projects

Organise and conduct kick-off meetings with construction contractors, relevant Government counterparts, island councils and community representatives. Undertake regular site visits and conduct technical meetings, including joint monitoring with relevant Government technical services, to closely monitor construction activities.

Track progress against agreed milestones and review site supervision reports to ensure compliance with approved designs, technical specifications, standards and timelines. Verify the quality of works and the application of occupational health and safety measures on site.

Apply appropriate monitoring and supervision tools to assess the quality of works, progress, and performance of engineering firms and construction contractors throughout the project lifecycle, including a multi-layered supervision and quality assurance approach and the use of documented hold and inspection points, where applicable.

Certify payments and variations and compile all required supporting documentation. Monitor construction expenditures and progress certificates, and maintain updated tracking tables for each construction activity.

Provide technical support to the UNICEF Contract Administrator on contract management, including amendments, variations, extensions of time and the application of liquidated damages, as required. Ensure that all documentation related to contract management is complete, accurate and properly archived.

Participate in partial, substantial and final handover and acceptance of works, following verification that all defects have been corrected during the defect liability period, and prepare and issue the relevant certificates. Prepare contract performance evaluations, support contract close-out in the financial system, and prepare the final completion report, including lessons learned, for internal submission as required.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Age:	18-80
Nationality:	Candidate must be a national of a country other than the country of assignment.
Required experience:	3 year(s)

ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

3 year(s)

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

A minimum of three (3) years of relevant professional experience at the national and/or international level in project management, site supervision, quality assurance and/or other directly related technical fields is required. Experience in development and humanitarian programming is required. Experience in emergency contexts is an asset.

The role requires specialised knowledge, experience and familiarity with the Pacific and Kiribati context.

Demonstrated experience in WASH related construction projects.
Experience applying climate resilient, eco efficient, or green building standards.
Experience working in remote, isolated, or island based environments.
Strong oral communication, documentation and basic reporting skills are required.
Other required and desirable technical competencies

- Excellent oral and written communication skills, including strong drafting, formulation and reporting abilities;
- High level of accuracy and professionalism in document production and editing;
- Excellent interpersonal skills, with cultural and social sensitivity, and the ability to work inclusively and collaboratively with a wide range of partners, including grassroots community members, faith-based and youth organisations, and authorities at different levels; familiarity with communication for development approaches and tools is an asset;
- Ability to work and adapt effectively and professionally in a challenging environment, including the ability to work in multicultural teams composed of national and international personnel;
- Strong computer literacy, including proficiency in standard MS Office applications (Word, Excel, Outlook, etc.), email and internet use, and

familiarity with basic database management and office technology;

- Self-motivation, ability to work with minimal supervision, and the ability to meet tight deadlines;
- Sound security awareness;
- Demonstrated interest in, or commitment to, the advancement of children’s rights, volunteerism as a mechanism for sustainable development, and the work of the United Nations system.

REQUIRED EDUCATION LEVEL

Bachelor's degree in Civil engineering, construction engineering, architecture or other relevant area(s).

LANGUAGE

Language	Proficiency	Required
English	Fluent	Yes

COMPETENCIES AND VALUES

Professionalism: Demonstrated understanding of operations relevant to UNICEF and the ability to apply technical knowledge and skills relevant or transferable to UNICEF procedures and rules. Demonstrated discretion, political sensitivity, diplomacy and tact in dealing with partners and stakeholders, and sound judgement in decision-making. Ability to liaise and coordinate effectively with a wide range of actors, including senior counterparts. Ability to work with a high degree of autonomy, personal initiative and accountability, and to take ownership of responsibilities. Resourceful and willing to assume a broad range of responsibilities, and able to work independently in accordance with established procedures. Ability to manage information objectively, accurately and confidentially, and to maintain a responsive and client-oriented approach.

Integrity: Demonstrates the values and ethical standards of the United Nations and UNICEF in daily work and behaviour, and acts without regard to personal gain. Resists undue political pressure in decision-making, stands by decisions made in the best interest of the organisation, and takes prompt action in cases of unprofessional or unethical behaviour. Does not abuse power or authority.

Teamwork and respect for diversity: Ability to work effectively across organisational boundaries and in multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and mixed-gender environments, with sensitivity and respect for diversity. Demonstrated ability to establish and maintain effective partnerships and harmonious working relationships. Sensitivity and adaptability to cultural, gender, religious, national and age differences. Commitment to gender equality and to ensuring the equal participation and full involvement of women and men in all aspects of UN operations. Ability to contribute to common goals and, where required, provide guidance and support to colleagues.

Commitment to continuous learning: Demonstrated initiative and willingness to learn new skills and remain abreast of developments in the relevant field of expertise, and the ability to adapt to change in the work environment.

Planning and organising: Strong organisational and problem-solving skills, with the ability to manage a high volume of work efficiently and within agreed timelines. Ability to set priorities and to plan, coordinate and monitor own work. Ability to work under pressure, manage competing deadlines and handle

multiple concurrent tasks and projects.

Communication: Strong interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to prepare clear and concise written reports and documentation. Ability to conduct presentations, articulate options and positions clearly, and make and defend recommendations. Ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with a wide range of counterparts, including national staff, volunteers, government officials, military personnel and community representatives from diverse backgrounds, and to transfer knowledge to different target audiences.

OTHER INFORMATION

Volunteerism is understood as a wide range of activities undertaken of free will, for the general public good, for which monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor.

LIVING CONDITIONS AND OTHER REMARKS

Living conditions in Kiritimati are characterized by isolation, limited infrastructure, and challenging environmental conditions. Security risks are generally very low, but access is highly constrained, with only two weekly international flights and cargo ships arriving every 2-3 months, leading to chronic shortages of food, fuel, and essential goods. The climate is consistently warm and humid, with frequent droughts, making water access difficult. Rainwater harvesting and costly desalination are the only sources, and electricity is unreliable with regular outages. Housing options for international staff are limited, often requiring significant refurbishment, and maintenance services are scarce. Cultural norms are relaxed, though the community is small and social or recreational facilities are limited. The cost of living is low but transport and supply are limited. Medical services are basic, lacking capacity for emergencies or specialist care, meaning medical evacuation is required for most serious conditions. Banking and communications infrastructure are minimal, but reliable internet is available through satellite. Despite these hardships, staff often find Kiritimati's close-knit community, natural beauty, and unique environment rewarding. With preparation and the right mindset, the duty station can be a memorable and enriching experience.

<https://www.unv.org/>

INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

United Nations Volunteers is an equal opportunity programme that welcomes applications from qualified professionals. We are committed to achieving diversity in terms of gender, care protected characteristics. As part of their adherence to the values of UNV, all UN Volunteers commit themselves to combat any form of discrimination, and to promoting respect for human rights and individual dignity, without distinction of a person's race, sex, gender identity, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, age, language, social origin or other status.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

UNICEF offers reasonable accommodation for UN Volunteers with disabilities. This may include, for example, accessible software, travel assistance for missions or personal attendants. We encourage you to disclose your disability

during your application in case you need reasonable accommodation during the recruitment process and afterwards in your assignment.

NOTE ON COVID-19 VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to duty station-specific vaccine requirements, appointments are subject to confirmation of fully-vaccinated status against SARS-CoV-2 (Covid-19) with a World Health Organization (WHO)-endorsed vaccine, which must be met prior to taking up the appointment. It does not apply to UN Volunteers who will work remotely and are not expected to work on or visit UNICEF premises, programme delivery locations or directly interact with communities UNICEF works with, nor to travel to perform functions for UNICEF for the duration of their contracts.

SCAM WARNING

The United Nations does not charge any application, processing, training, interviewing, testing or other fee in connection with the application or recruitment process. Should you receive a solicitation for the payment of a fee, please disregard it. Furthermore, please note that emblems, logos, names and addresses are easily copied and reproduced. Therefore, you are advised to apply particular care when submitting personal information on the web.

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