

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: Refugee Caseworker – StARS

Term: August 16, 2022 – July 15, 2023

Date Required: August 16, 2022

Location: Cairo, Egypt

Project Theme: DS Humanitarian Assistance Salt/Yamen

Job Synopsis:

The SALT/YAMENER will serve alongside St. Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS) helping to provide direct services to refugees, including giving information, advice, and support either on a one-to-one basis, or in groups. They will also be in a support role to the relevant program coordinator and to the psychosocial workers, providing administrative and technical assistance with programming, monitoring, and training.

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.

- Educational background in social work, psychology, anthropology, or another related field.
- Previous experience working with refugees or other disadvantaged groups is an asset.
- Fluency in spoken and written English is essential.
- Keen interest in issues relating to refugees, as well as compassion and willingness to work directly with refugees and migrants.
- Well-organized, with excellent administrative and IT skills.
- Ability to work in crowded, noisy conditions.
- Motivation and willingness to work hard in a fast-paced environment is needed.
- Ability to learn quickly on-the-job.
- Ability to work in a multi-cultural inter-faith environment.
- Interest in learning Arabic.

Key Responsibilities:

- Provide direct services to refugees, including through giving information, advice, and support either on a one-to-one basis, or in groups.
- Be a support role to the program coordinator and psychosocial workers, providing administrative and technical assistance with programming, monitoring, and training.
- Additional duties assigned based on the needs of the program and the SALTer's interests and abilities.

Assignment Narrative:

St Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS) is a refugee service provider in central Cairo that works to enhance the quality of life for refugees and vulnerable migrants through three broad programs: education, legal, and psychosocial services. They provide high-quality services meeting the unaddressed needs of refugees and provide a safe and inclusive space for displaced people to come together as a community. They serve people from many places, including Ethiopia, Iraq, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Eritrea, and Syria.

StARS' mission is to enhance the quality of life of refugees in Egypt and make their rights a reality through client-centered programs. Their vision is a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for refugees in which they can exercise their rights, pursue their aspirations, and live with dignity. To learn more, see: www.stars-egypt.org.

Often the work of StARS takes place in a very crowded office where workers are generally four to a desk, two on each side facing each other. There is a lot of noise and activity in the room, with people constantly moving in and out of the room.

StARS' Psychosocial Services assist refugees and other vulnerable migrants who need support with medical, mental health or social needs, such as shelter, security, community support, and general well-being and integration in Cairo. This support is provided through seven psychosocial programs:

- Adults and Families Psychosocial Program – one-to-one psychosocial support through case-management with adults and families in need.
- Unaccompanied Children and Youth Psychosocial Program – one-to-one psychosocial support through case management with children who are in Egypt without their parents.
- Unaccompanied Youth Bridging Program – academic and psycho-educational classes for unaccompanied children and youth.
- Medical Access Program – information and services to address unmet medical needs
- Groups and Activities Psychosocial Program – psychosocial and recreational groups, activities, and workshops with refugees at StARS and in refugee communities.
- Direct Assistance Program – distribution of clothes, food, hygiene items and other direct assistance.
- Drop-in and Emergency Response Program – drop-in clinic for clients wishing to access services from any of the psychosocial programs.

Assistance is provided by a range of staff, predominantly psychosocial caseworkers who come from refugee communities themselves.

The SALT/YAMENer will be placed into the psychosocial program that most suits the skills and interests of the individual, as well as the needs of the psychosocial department. Specifically, this will be either with the Unaccompanied Youth unit or the Adult and Families unit.

The SALT/YAMENer will work under the supervision of the Director of Psychosocial Services. The individual will be provided with training, support, and supervision throughout their time working with the program.

Location Description:

The SALT/YAMENer will live in Zamalek, Cairo as a member of the MCC Egypt team and will be seconded to Saint Andrews Refugee Services (StARS). The participant will commute to StARS Mohandessin office about 15 minutes away via public transportation and will live across the street from the Anglican Cathedral in a building owned by the Anglican Church in Zamalek. The SALT/YAMENer may live alone in a bachelor suite or share a flat with another person who works at the Diocese that is not a member of the MCC team.

Cairo is a bustling metropolis of 22 million people; streets are crowded and busy at all hours of the day and night. Cultural opportunities abound including museums, art galleries, theatre, ancient monuments, lectures, shopping, and restaurants. Egypt's ancient sites, natural beauty and cultural attractions are generally affordable and easy to access for day trips and longer holidays. Western consumer products, services and entertainment are readily available, and prices are affordable; however, MCCers are expected to live a simple lifestyle and live within budget guidelines.

The commute to work for this assignment includes Cairo's fairly dependable metro system and walking on busy downtown streets. There is an extensive and inexpensive network of trains, buses, and taxis between and within towns and cities. MCC workers primarily use this public transportation system. Good medical care is available. The weather is hot for five months, cool for three, and beautifully pleasant with warm sunny days and cool evenings for the four months in between.

Outside of Egyptian church services (various Protestant denominations or Orthodox) in Arabic, possibilities for worshiping in English in Cairo include four or five Protestant or non-denominational congregations, Catholic Mass opportunities in several locations (and various other languages), and a monthly Coptic Orthodox Mass and Bible study in English.

The MCC Egypt team consists of about 7-10 people, although numbers fluctuate. The team endeavors to be supportive of each other and to create a good spirit of cooperation, mutual service, and fun. The whole MCC group gathers monthly for events such as worship, business meetings, parties, retreats, lectures, and field trips.

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.
- The challenges of an MCC assignment in Cairo are basically the challenges of living in a big city. It is noisy, polluted, and crowded, with significant time spent getting from one place to another. It can be difficult to build meaningful relationships with others who are caught up in hectic daily lives.

- Cairo comes alive at night, in all its exuberance and noise - and when neighbors are celebrating, sleep can be difficult. It is essential that all MCCers in Egypt live by the lifestyle guidelines as MCC is in Egypt in partnership with the churches and we are accountable to the church, MCC and the community.
- Egypt has more stability now than in previous years, however we continue to keep aware of the security situation in case of any significant changes. MCC Egypt regularly adapts and adjusts security policies to reflect current security realities. These policies include restrictions on social media postings and mobility both inside and outside of Cairo.
- Personal frustration can arise as a result of rude behavior and harassment in the street, especially for women. In conversation with others, workers find ways to decrease the likelihood of such encounters, learn to recognize dangerous situations and cope so that the frustration does not become overwhelming. At the same time, there are kind, helpful and respectful strangers on Egyptian streets. In general, streets are safer than those of most large cities in Canada and the U.S.
- The local area and churches are not supportive to LGBTQ+ persons. LGBTQ+ lifestyles are considered illegal. Support of or participation in such lifestyles can be dangerous.
- 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