

Research Assistant in Sierra Leone

About the role

We are seeking to appoint a **Research Assistant** to provide research and operational support for a Randomized Controlled Trial led by Dr. Niccolò F. Meriggi (University of Oxford), Prof. Maarten Voors (Wageningen University) and Prof. Ahmed Mushfiq Mobarak (Yale University). This is a full-time position based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, with a probationary period of 3 months.

The role is perfect for someone with a background in Economics or Development Economics and aims to address questions related to improving the delivery of basic services through the public sector in resource-constrained settings. The RA will work on a research project, “*Scaling Bundled Health Services in Rural Sierra Leone*.” The project is a large-scale randomized controlled trial implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Health in Sierra Leone and international NGO partners, with a particular focus on testing cost-effective and scalable strategies to improve health outcomes in hard-to-reach communities.

The Research Assistant will play a key role in managing the implementation of the project in Sierra Leone. Specific responsibilities include overseeing field operations; developing research protocols, survey instruments, training manuals, and field scripts; conducting high-frequency data quality checks and data cleaning; supporting survey implementation and monitoring. They will also support stakeholder engagement and coordinate logistics with the Principal Investigators and Field Coordinators.

The postholder will play a significant role in supporting the dissemination of project findings through the preparation of presentations, reports, and policy briefs. This position is an excellent opportunity for candidates considering doctoral study in economics or public policy, or careers in international development, government, NGOs, or think tanks. It offers valuable exposure to the design and management of a large-scale randomized controlled trial implemented in partnership with government ministries and international organizations.

A Master’s degree in economics, or development studies with a quantitative focus is required. Proficiency in Stata is essential. Previous experience working in low- and middle- income countries is desirable.

Interested candidates should submit a current CV, a brief cover letter outlining their relevant experience and interest in the position, and a short writing sample. Applications should be submitted by email to slvaccine2027@gmail.com before **30 June 2026**.

Any further queries regarding the job posting should be directed to uday.wadehra@economics.ox.ac.uk.

Responsibilities

1. Quantitative research on specific research projects, including the following tasks:
 - a. Match, clean and analyse household and individual level data, with support and guidance from the Principal Investigator(s);
 - b. Conduct and present original quantitative data analysis;
 - c. Construct and follow a coherent and structured data management and organization system;
 - d. Contribute to research presentations and publications.
2. Contribute to the design, management and oversight of field-based teams, including the following tasks:
 - a. Conduct tasks to support development of hypotheses and theoretical frameworks, such as: literature review, analysis of qualitative or administrative data;
 - b. Support development and coding of questionnaires (using SurveyCTO) and interventions;
 - c. Set-up data collection and management systems to ensure data quality and research integrity;
 - d. Support field logistics by engaging with stakeholders;
 - e. Build and maintain relationships with implementing partners;
 - f. Support developing budgets and activity plans, and monitoring spending.
3. Management and coordination of field teams, including the following tasks:
 - a. Organise and monitor training of 100+ enumerators;
 - b. Liaise with implementing partners to develop training materials;
 - c. Monitor implementation and data collection activities in 500+ communities.
4. Contribute to outreach and dissemination activities with support from the team to maximise the impact of the team's research findings, including the following tasks:
 - a. Conduct policy advisory work and produce policy briefs, donor reports and working papers;
 - b. Conduct cost-effectiveness analyses of interventions to inform policy discussions;

Selection criteria

Essential selection criteria

1. Master's degree in economics, public policy or development studies (or equivalent) with a quantitative focus;
2. Proven experience in project management or supporting empirical primary data collection;
3. Ability to carry out independent quantitative research, including excellent skills in statistics/econometrics and programming software;
4. Proficiency in Stata;
5. Excellent command of written and spoken English;
6. Demonstrable team working skills with a flexible can-do approach, self-motivation, resilience and a willingness to adapt to the changing team needs and priorities;
7. Exceptional organizational skills with a strong attention to detail and accuracy;
8. Excellent written and oral communication skills, including the ability to synthesise complex issues for a non-expert audience.

Desirable selection criteria

- Proficiency in R or Python is a plus;
- Previous experience working or residing in a low- and middle-income country;
- Proficiency in using ODK-based survey tools;
- Experience in fieldwork budgeting and monitoring of expenditures with third party suppliers.