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## **Research Associate for MPOWER Youth Employment**

### **I. About the project**

The Government of Meghalaya has launched the Meghalaya Program for Adolescent Wellbeing, Empowerment and Resilience (MPOWER) which aims to nurture holistic development of adolescents who are between the ages of 9-19 in Meghalaya through a multi-sectoral approach. The project shall target critical challenges faced by adolescents in the state; i.e., reducing teenage pregnancy and school dropout rates, improve their mental well-being and encourage them to develop career aspirations. The project design will be guided by an age based skills competency framework that will be developed and facilitated by programme managers and state experts, outlining the set of knowledge, skills, and behaviours that the state envisions. To ensure a broad coverage, the project will deal with adolescents who are both currently enrolled in, and dropped-out of school, in addition to strengthening the capacity of relevant state institutions. The project proposes a set of coordinated multi sectoral interventions to improve the human capital outcomes of adolescent boys and girls aged 9 to 19. These interventions aim to make the current cohort of adolescents more productive and resilient so that they can contribute to the sustainable economic growth of the state of Meghalaya.

### **II. External Partnerships**

To achieve the outcomes stipulated under MPOWER, the Government of Meghalaya through the Meghalaya Government Innovation Lab (GIL) proposes to set up a technical partnership with Harvard Growth Lab to enable the state to engage in policy innovations required to become a developed state by 2030. The primary objective of this partnership is to analyse and address the constraints and opportunities for accelerating Meghalaya's economic growth in a sustainable and inclusive manner. Special emphasis will be placed on the potential role of state-led youth employment initiatives over the next decade.

### **III. Building an Economic Growth Strategy through MPOWER**

Through MPOWER, Meghalaya aims to promote prosperity while safeguarding its natural and social capital. Objectives include diversifying the economy, boosting productivity, promoting sustainability, improving infrastructure, fostering entrepreneurship, and enabling skill development.

In collaboration with Harvard Growth Lab, MPOWER will identify factors behind economic underperformance and limited youth employment, developing sustainable growth pathways. The project will leverage the expertise of the Harvard Growth Lab and involve government, academia, businesses, and community organisations to create evidence-based strategies, strengthen local institutions, and foster innovation and inclusion.

#### IV. Scope of Work

This role will focus on the data systems and state capability component (Component 3) of the MPOWER project. Specifically, the activities encompassed within this role will target the economic development and well-being themes—namely, those related to job creation—that feature in Component 3, through the PDIA approach.

The Research Associate/Economist will work hand-in-hand with the MPOWER PMU to execute the activities outlined in this role. These activities include the following:

- **Diagnosis:** Initial analysis of job creation prospects for Meghalaya, including:
  - Review of existing productive employment initiatives in the state, and learnings from these initiatives; and
  - Identification and prioritisation of high-potential economic activities; and
  - Review of data systems and processes for tracking key employment outcomes, and recommendations for how the state can feasibly improve data collection and analysis
- **Diagnosis, private sector focus:** Private sector engagement to surface key bottlenecks and opportunities in identified high-potential, job creating economic activities for youth
- **Innovating new practices/ actions:** Support State leadership and MPOWER team to strategize around opportunities for, and key bottlenecks to, activities with high potential for youth employment generation, including:
  - Top hypotheses for constraints to employment in the identified high-potential economic activities;
  - Approach to structured public-private information exchange and problem solving;
  - Tools and processes for government teams to de-bottleneck constraints to youth employment; and
  - Recommendations for implementing the strategy in an iterative, outcome-oriented fashion

#### V. Duties and Responsibilities

This role includes (but is not limited to) the following duties and responsibilities:

##### 1. Economic Analysis and Research:

- Conduct detailed economic research and analysis to identify constraints and opportunities for Meghalaya's economic growth.
- Analyse secondary datasets like National Sample Survey (NSS), Population and Economic Census, and Periodic Labor Force Survey (PLFS), etc. as per research project requirements.

##### 2. Policy Development and Evaluation:

- Develop evidence-based economic policies and strategies in line with MPOWER's objectives.

- Develop and implement performance measurement systems to track the success of economic policies and programs.
  - Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of existing and proposed economic policies and recommend improvements.
- 3. Data Collection and Management:**
- Design and implement data collection methodologies for economic research.
  - Assist in primary quantitative and qualitative data collection activities, including preparation of survey instruments, pilots, data collection quality control, and analysis.
- 4. Report Preparation and Presentation:**
- Prepare comprehensive reports, briefs, and presentations on economic findings, research outcomes, and policy recommendations.
  - Present research findings to government officials, stakeholders, and the public
- 5. Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement:**
- Collaborate with local, regional, national, and international economic organisations and research institutions, including the Harvard Growth Lab.
  - Engage with diverse stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses, academic institutions, and community organisations.

## **VI. Educational Qualification**

A Master's/Bachelor's degree in Economics, Finance, Business, Mathematics Statistics, or related field with emphasis on quantitative and/or analytical skills

## **VII. Required Experience**

1. 3 years relevant experience with Undergraduate degree; or 2 years relevant experience with Postgraduate degree;
2. Demonstrated experience in policy analysis, economic advisory, public sector and management consulting, or related work.
3. Experience in private sector development, inclusive growth strategies, investment, and/or youth employment highly desirable.

## **VIII. Essential Skills & Attributes**

1. Strong analytical skills and ability to synthesise complex information into clear, easily understandable outputs.
2. Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with demonstrated experience engaging productively with diverse stakeholders, including government officials, donors, research organisations, and philanthropic organisations.
3. Excellent organisational and planning skills, that ensure work is effectively prioritised to meet deadlines.
4. Ability to work unsupervised, under your own initiative with a proactive approach to problem-solving.

5. Ability to use quantitative and/or qualitative data analysis software packages (e.g., R, STATA, Python, etc) is desirable.
6. Experience working with large data sets, e.g. NSSO, ASI, etc., is desirable.
7. Proficiency in Office suite (in particular, Word, Excel and PowerPoint).

**IX. Duration of the Assignment/Contract**

The assignment duration is one year with a provision to extend annually during the project period up to coterminous with the project completion period subject to satisfactory performance, whichever is earlier.

**How to apply:**

To Apply for this role, kindly fill in the following online form: <https://tinyurl.com/july24mpower>