

RFP/COK/001/2025
TERMS OF REFERENCE (ToR)
FOR PROVISION OF THIRD – PARTY MONITORING COMPANY FOR CONSULTING &
DETAILED SERVICES FOR THE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN AFGHANISTAN

A. BACKGROUND

Afghanistan presents a challenging operational environment for construction projects, characterized by logistical constraints, security concerns and variable environmental conditions. Despite these challenges, UNHCR remains committed to ensuring that all its construction projects adhere to high quality standards and are delivered on time and within budget.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Afghanistan seeks to engage a qualified Third-Party Monitoring Company (TPMC) to provide independent monitoring and evaluation of construction projects across various locations in field and office operations to ensure the quality is maintained. These projects aim to improve community facilities and living conditions for refugee returnees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), IDP returnees, and host communities.

B. BASELINE INFORMATION AND OBJECTIVES

In recent years, the scale and complexity of construction projects have necessitated the engagement of a qualified Third-Party Monitoring Company (TPMC) which will ensure independent oversight, transparency, and accountability in project implementation.

The UNHCR technical team in its capacity and support from the different sub-offices and field offices will work together with the TPMC to develop technical packages for each project and get endorsement by relevant line ministries and its relevant directorates. The designs and technical specifications will be available at the UNHCR Country office shelter unit and the relevant sub/field offices technical unit and will be accessible to the TPMC upon request.

The primary objective of this engagement is to ensure that construction projects are implemented effectively, meet quality standards, adhere to timelines and budgets and that they deliver tangible benefits to the target communities. The TPMC will provide impartial oversight, detailed reporting and stakeholder engagement to support UNHCR's mission and enhance accountability and transparency.

Specific objectives include:

- **Project efficiency and timelines** - TPMC will monitor project timelines to identify and mitigate potential delays. They will also evaluate adherence to project schedules and propose solutions in case of deviations,
- **Quality assurance and control** - They will ensure all construction activities meet national and international quality standards and verify the use of quality materials and adherence to the technical specifications and the expected workmanship.

- **Safety compliance** - TPMC will ensure compliance with the relevant safety standards and regulations as well as monitor adherence to ethical labor practices.
- **Capacity building** - TPMC will provide training to local project teams to enhance their technical skills and share best practices and lessons learned to improve future projects implementation.
- **Stakeholder engagement and communication** - TPMC will facilitate effective communication and coordination among UNHCR, Contractors, local authorities, and community representatives. They will address concerns and issues raised by stakeholders promptly and transparently.
- **Impact assessment**- TPMC will participate in conducting post - distribution monitoring to assess the impact of the construction projects.

C. SCOPE OF WORKS

The TPMC will be responsible for providing expert-level oversight and reporting on the construction projects implemented under UNHCR's supervision in Afghanistan. The company is expected to deploy a skilled team of professionals, led by a designated Project Manager for overall coordination, who shall serve as UNHCR's country office's primary contact supplemented by a Regional focal point for coordination at each Sub/Field office level.

The detailed scope of works include.

1) Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Supervision of the contractors in the areas of monitoring, change of orders if any, contract compliance, quality control, quality assurance, safety and documentation of all interactions such as:

- In coordination with the UNHCR technical unit in the Country office and sub/field level, conduct regular (preferably daily) site visits to monitor the progress of construction projects.
- Assess the quality of materials through quality assurance in the pre implementation stage of the project (Submittal management) and quality control during implementation adherence to workmanship and technical specifications.
- Check the designs and modify designs where necessary, technical specifications, BoQs, conformity to the civil construction norms as specified in the UNHCR General Conditions of Contracts (GCC).
- Evaluate project timelines, identify deviations, and provide actionable recommendations for adjustments to UNHCR.
- In coordination with the UNHCR technical units in the field and at country office level, provide detailed explanations for all queries raised by contractor/company.
- When requested, participate and coordinate with the UNHCR technical units, project site inspections/meetings, including but not limited to kick-off meetings, regular progress meetings, occasional DFAs sectorial monitoring, troubleshooting, practical completion/handover, and final sign-off meetings.
- To ensure compliance with all design parameters, inspect and validate the setting-out, overall progress, quality control/assurance of work, and escalate technical issues that may arise beyond the ToRs of the TPMC.

- When required, review financial implications of project variations, and prepare supporting documents (e.g., Notes for File) for contract amendments or addendums. At the practical completion stage, undertake a joint inspection of the works with all parties and agree on a snag/punch list of deficiencies/outstanding works and oversee their rectification before issuance of a completion certificate.
- On submission by contractor, review and provide progress payment reports/certificates as appropriate to the UNHCR technical unit.

2) Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM):

- Where applicable, third-party monitoring companies may indeed be tasked with conducting PDM, particularly in situations where independent assessments and verification are required for accountability and transparency purposes. However, the responsibility for PDM can also fall on other entities but, regardless of who conducts PDM, it is essential for the monitoring process to be transparent, independent, and accountable. This helps to ensure the credibility and reliability of the findings and enables stakeholders to make informed decisions based on the monitoring results.

3) Reporting

- The TPMC will submit comprehensive reports on project status, including photographic evidence and documentation of findings on a weekly basis or as requested.
- Highlight key challenges, risks, and recommendations for corrective actions to ensure project objectives are met.
- Provide a final evaluation report summarizing project implementation, lessons learned, and actionable recommendations for future initiatives.

4) Compliance and Safety

- The TPMC must ensure that construction projects comply with national and international safety standards, including environmental and social safeguards.
- Ensure that labor practices meet ethical and legal standards, emphasizing the protection of workers' rights and well-being.

5) Stakeholder Engagement

- The TPMC shall liaise with project stakeholders, including contractors, local authorities, and community representatives, to address issues collaboratively.
- Facilitate communication and coordination among stakeholders to maintain transparency and resolve conflicts.

6) Capacity Building

- The TPMC will provide technical training and capacity-building support to local project teams to strengthen their ability to manage and implement construction projects.
- Share best practices and lessons learned to enhance future project implementation.

D. DELIVERABLES FROM THE TPM COMPANY

The deliverables from the Third-Party Monitoring Company (TPMC) are crucial for ensuring the success and accountability of the construction projects. The key deliverables shall include.

- 1) **Detailed workplan and methodology** - The TPMC will provide a comprehensive workplan at the inception of the project, clearly outlining the construction activities, timelines, methodologies, risk management strategies and key milestones.
- 2) **Site visit timetable** -The TPMC will develop and submit a timetable for conducting regular site visits, which shall align with UNHCR's project milestones and reporting requirements.
- 3) **Bi-Weekly, monthly progress reports and ad hoc reports** - The TPMC shall submit bi-weekly and monthly progress reports for each site. These reports should include photographic evidence, milestone updates, quality assessments, and any other identified issues with proposed solutions.
- 4) **Issue identification and resolution** - the TPMC is responsible for proactively identifying delays, risks or issues affecting the project and proposing practical solutions to address them.
- 5) **Final evaluation report** - upon completion of the project, TPMC will compile and submit a comprehensive final evaluation report. This report should assess the project's implementation, highlight key findings, and provide lessons learned and recommendations for future improvements.
- 6) **Executive summary report** - a consolidated summary report of the project's performance will be provided which shall include key achievements and strategic recommendations.
- 7) **Security and compliance integration**- The TPMC will incorporate UNHCR's security requirements and compliance measures into their planning and execution processes.

E. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The selected Third-Party Monitoring Company (TPMC) must meet the following qualifications and demonstrate the necessary experience to fulfil its mandate effectively:

1. Professional expertise

- Proven experience in monitoring and evaluating construction projects, preferably in challenging environments such as Afghanistan.
- Expertise in construction quality assurance, quality strong control, and project management.
- Strong knowledge of national and international standards and best practices in construction, including technical specifications, safety standards, and environmental safeguards.

2. Composition of the Technical team

- Highly qualified architects, engineers, and project management professionals with a minimum of 5 years' experience in their respective fields.
- At least 3 professional staff members specializing in design (architectural & structural), structural analysis and civil works, with relevant certifications or registration in their areas of expertise.
- The team must demonstrate experience on multi-story buildings, structural and electromechanical analysis, and similar construction projects.

3. Track Record

- A minimum of five years of operation in the construction or consulting industry.
- Documented success in managing and completing multiple construction projects of comparable scope and complexity within the last five years.
- Experience in projects involving community infrastructure, such as schools, clinics, housing and other essential communal facilities.

4. Local and international compliance

- Registration and compliance with national laws, regulations, and professional codes.
- Ability to demonstrate sound financial standing through tax-compliant certificates and recent financial statements.

5. Operational capacity

- Ability to conduct fieldwork in challenging environments, including remote and high-risk locations, while maintaining high safety and ethical standards.
- Capacity to deploy and manage resources effectively to meet project timelines and deliverables.

6. Analytical and Reporting Skills

- Proven ability to prepare detailed analytical reports, including technical evaluations, progress updates, and financial implications.
- Strong proficiency in providing actionable recommendations to address issues or improve project implementation.

7. References and Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

- References from at least three previous clients for similar projects, demonstrating the TPMC's reliability, technical expertise, and effectiveness in delivering results.
- The company and its personnel must be independent and free from any affiliation with the construction companies involved in the project to ensure impartial oversight.

F. SUPERVISION AND QUALITY CONTROL SERVICES FOR OTHER UNHCR PROJECTS

UNHCR may extend the Consulting Company services for the supervision and quality control of additional projects during the construction phases. When requested, the TPMC shall act as UNHCR Consulting Advisor together with the UNHCR technical unit, as needed and, though not limited to below, carry out the following:

- When requested, participate and coordinate with UNHCR technical unit, project site inspections/supervision, including, regular site meetings, completion/handover, and final sign-off meetings.
- To ensure compliance with all design parameters, progress, and quality control of the works, and to advise on technical issues that may arise during the course of the works.
- Undertake joint inspection of the works with all parties and agree on a punch list of deficiencies/outstanding works to be rectified.

Note: For this supervision service, the TPMC shall assign at least one (1) Site Engineer during the construction of projects to work together with the UNHCR technical unit. The maximum duration of these supervision services shall be considered for two (2) years with possible extension of one (1) + one (1) year, if required. More information will be provided by the UNHCR technical unit to the TPMC during the site visit. [The financial proposal for these services shall be provided separately according to the template Financial Proposal b].

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