

Terms Of Reference for Temporary Appointment

Post Title: Construction Specialist (2 Positions)

Post level: P-3

Section: Supply & Logistics

Duty Station: Aleppo and Qamishli

TA Duration: 9 Months

Supervisor: Construction Manager

Date: 5 February 2026

Background

The fundamental mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child, everywhere, in everything the organization does — in programs, advocacy, and in operations. The equity strategy, emphasizing the most disadvantaged and excluded children and families, translates this commitment to children's rights into action. For UNICEF, equity means that all children have an opportunity to survive, develop and reach their full potential without discrimination, bias, or favoritism. To the degree that any child has an equal chance in life in its social, political, economic, civic, and cultural dimensions There is growing evidence that investing in the health, education, and protection of a society's most disadvantaged citizens — addressing inequity — will not only give all children the opportunity to fulfill their potential but also lead to sustained growth and stability of countries. This is why the focus on equity is so vital. It accelerates progress towards realizing the human rights of all children, which is the universal mandate of UNICEF, as outlined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child while supporting nations' equitable development.

Job organizational context:

Since the onset of the protracted crisis, Syria has experienced extensive damage to public infrastructure, severely affecting access to essential services for children and their families. UNICEF Syria implements a range of construction projects aimed at restoring and improving critical public service infrastructure, particularly in the Education, WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene), Health sectors. These interventions form a core component of UNICEF's mandate to support the continuity, recovery and resilience of basic services, contributing to improved learning environments, safer water and sanitation systems, and strengthened primary healthcare and nutrition service delivery.

Purpose for the assignment:

The Construction Specialist reports to the Construction Manager and manages and supervises construction works at field office level under national oversight.

The incumbent coordinates field teams and contractors and ensures systematic monitoring and reporting of construction activities. Responsibilities include the review and validation of technical documentation, work progress, payment requests, variation orders, and claims, ensuring compliance with contract provisions and physical progress.

The incumbent supports national engineering procurement processes, including technical and financial screening and due diligence of bidders and contracted parties, with particular attention to capacity, cash flow, and risk exposure. The incumbent ensures that all projects under their responsibility comply with UNICEF global standards, policies, and procedures, and deliver quality, efficiency, sustainability, and value for money.

The incumbent supports the Construction Manager in coordinating construction-related inputs from field offices, including facilitating timely information sharing, consolidating and analyzing project data, and preparing regular summary reports on progress, challenges, risks, and compliance to support evidence-based decision-making and effective programme management.

All construction interventions supported by the incumbent shall integrate UNICEF cross-cutting priorities in line with organizational policies, including:

- Disability inclusion and universal accessibility, ensuring that facilities are safe, inclusive and usable for all children, caregivers and service providers.
- Climate change adaptation and environmental sustainability, to reduce environmental footprints and enhance the resilience of infrastructure to climate-related risks.
- Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS), to identify, prevent, mitigate and manage potential adverse environmental and social impacts throughout the project lifecycle.

The incumbent collaborates closely with UNICEF Programme/ Operations in defining construction interventions to meet programmatic needs and achieve results for children.

Key function, Accountability and Related Duties/Tasks

Summary of key functions/accountabilities:

1. Preparation of construction annual workplan
 2. Collaboration with UNICEF Programmes/Operations and coordination with Government counterparts
 3. Preparation of design and technical documents
 4. Support with the procurement process
 5. Monitoring construction projects
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1. Preparation of construction annual workplan
 - Prepare and collect information required for the annual work plan on regular activities, ongoing projects and others in the pipeline.
 2. Collaboration with UNICEF Programmes/Operations and coordination with Government counterparts
 - Provide technical backstopping and support in matter of construction project management to Programme/ Operations sections and Government counterparts; contribute with Programme sections in developing child-friendly community infrastructure development program proposals; provide information to Programme on construction related activities to include them in their AWP.
 - Provide assistance to Programme /Operations sections through involvement in construction project proposals, planning, and preparation of relevant terms of reference; analyze the project context and suggest the appropriate implementation and procurement modality.
 - In collaboration with the Government counterparts, develop and produce innovative cost-effective construction designs using local construction materials; compile and update list of best practices in construction and building design.
 - Attend steering and technical cooperation meetings; prepare PPT presentations on projects' progress; undertake follow-up actions in relation to project implementation and monitoring.
 - Provide Programme/Operations sections with information on projects' progress; undertake appropriate actions to overcome technical obstacles; draft relevant sections of project reports required for donors, management, annual reports, etc.
 3. Preparation of design and technical documents

- Prepare the scope of construction works based on Programme/ Operations requirements, budget and site limitations; define deliverables and payment modality.
 - Apply UNICEF norms and standards (child-friendly, accessibility, MOSS, MORSS, etc.) to construction projects, taking into consideration the local environment and available materials; verify if compliance with green building standards is required in coordination with DFAM Field Support Unit.
 - Check technical documents related to construction (design drawings, technical specifications and bills of quantities); verify whether they are clear, complete and compliant to programmatic and construction needs, eco-efficiency and accessibility requirements; undertake the actions required to endorse these technical documents by relevant ministries.
 - Follow up with the designing firms and government entities for obtaining all permits required for construction activities prior initiating works.
4. Support with the procurement process
- Provide support to Supply section with preparation of LPA requests and CRC submissions with supporting documents related to construction activities.
 - Conduct surveys to identify potential construction companies and engineering firms available in the local market; prepare terms of reference required for establishing local Long-Term Arrangements for engineering services (design and site supervision).
 - Prepare tender documents in relation to construction works and engineering services; attend bidders' conference and present the technical components of the tender; prepare answers on technical questions raised by the bidders during the tendering.
 - Support Supply section in organizing bidders' conference and site visits; conduct the evaluation of technical proposals received and prepare the evaluation report; provide support to Supply section on the analysis of financial proposals.
5. Monitoring construction projects
- Conduct the kick-off meeting of construction works with the construction company, the engineering firm and relevant government counterparts.
 - Provide close monitoring on construction activities by undertaking regular site visits and conducting regular technical meetings including joint monitoring with relevant Government technical services; follow up progress for each activity per milestones and review site supervision reports to ensure work compliance with norms, standards, and timeline; verify quality and precautions on health and safety standards on ground.
 - Use effective monitoring and supervision tools to ensure easily assessment of works quality, progress, and performance of engineering firms and construction companies during the entire duration of the project; apply multi-layered approach to construction supervision and quality assurance; use documented hold and inspection points, where applicable.
 - Certify payments/ variations and compile supporting documents; monitor construction expenditures and progress certificates; prepare and maintain relevant table for each construction activity.
 - Provide support to UNICEF Contract Administrator on contract management, amendments, variations, duration extensions, applying liquidated damages, etc. Ensure all documents/information required for contract management are available, complete and properly archived.
 - Participate in the partial, substantial and final reception of works after verifying the correction of all defects during the DLP; prepare and issue relevant certificates.

- Prepare Contract Performance Evaluation; provide support to UNICEF Contract Administrator on contract close-out in VISION; prepare the final completion report with the lessons learned for submission to the Construction Unit (SD) and AMS/NYHQ as necessary.

Impacts of Results

The ability of the Construction Specialist to provide support to the Construction Manager successfully plan, manage and oversee the effective and efficient management of construction activities for UNICEF Programme/Operations, and directly impact on programmatic goals and results for children. This in turn contributes to maintaining/enhancing the credibility of UNICEF as an effective and responsible manager of funds entrusted to the organization and to furthering UNICEF image as a competent organization for delivering cost effective and sustainable programme results for children.

UNICEF values and competency Required (based on the updated Framework)

Core Values

- Care
- Respect
- Integrity
- Trust
- Accountability
- Sustainability

Core competencies

- Demonstrates Self Awareness and Ethical Awareness (1)
- Works Collaboratively with others (1)
- Builds and Maintains Partnerships (1)
- Innovates and Embraces Change (1)
- Thinks and Acts Strategically (1)
- Drive to achieve impactful results (1)
- Manages ambiguity and complexity (1)

Skills

- Ability to resolve difficult, complex and sensitive situations often under pressure.
- Ability to initiate and manage change in a diverse environment.
- Ability to clearly and concisely express ideas and concepts in written and oral form.
- Ability to manage and monitor the effective use of resources.
- Ability to supervise and direct a team of professional and support staff working on construction projects.
- Ability to work strategically to realize organizational goals, develop strategies, set clear visions.
- Strong communication and negotiation skills to establish and maintain trusted partnerships for achievement of objectives and to develop close and effective working relationships with diverse stakeholders.
- Ability to identify and analyze systemic issues, formulate opinions and make conclusions and recommendations to resolve them.
- Skill in the identification of new opportunities or requirements to meet challenges in the field and propose changes.
- Strong knowledge of latest developments and technology in construction industry.
- Strong understanding of construction project cycles, from programme needs assessment, through planning, procurement and contracting, monitoring the execution of work and evaluation of project outcomes.
- Strong overall knowledge and understanding of UNICEF programmes, public procurement principles, financial and legal aspects of construction issues, ethics and risk management of construction projects.

Recruitment Qualifications

Education:

- An advanced university degree is required in civil engineering, construction engineering, architecture or other relevant area.

Experience:

- A minimum of five (5) years of relevant experience, at the national and/or international levels, in project management, site supervision, quality assurance and/or other directly related technical fields is required.
- Understanding of development and humanitarian work.
- Emergency experience is an advantage.
- Professional experience with a United Nations agency, international NGO, or other humanitarian/development organization is an asset.
- Experience in integrating cross-cutting priorities such as disability inclusion, climate change adaptation, environmental and social safeguards (ESS), and social protection considerations into project design and implementation is desirable.
- Experience related to energy-efficient buildings and innovative construction technologies is considered a strong asset.
- Experience in the use of construction management and design tools (e.g., AutoCAD, project planning software) and familiarity with international norms and standards is an advantage.

Desirable:

- A master's degree in engineering and/or specialization in energy-efficient buildings and innovative technologies applied to the construction sector will be considered a strong asset.

Language Requirements:

- Fluency in English is required. Knowledge of Arabic language is considered as an asset.