

Request for Quotes for Auditing Services

Location: Virtual

Deadline for submission: June 23/2023

Chemonics International is soliciting proposals from qualified individuals to audit the financial management systems for the CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme, a £ 12 million Programme managed by Chemonics and funded by FCDO for the period 16 May 2022 – 31 July 2023. This will be a virtual audit. The eligible individual will have experience in conducting similar audit assignments of international development programmes. Prior experience in auditing FCDO programmes a significant asset. The availability to start with the assignment on June 29, 23 is also a significant asset.

Programme Summary:

The CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme is maintaining the delivery of essential services for 4.1 million host community and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northwest Syria. The Programme provides financial support and capacity-strengthening assistance to the Syria Civil Defence, to achieve this goal through a subaward mechanism. The programme also supports the continuation of essential service delivery and specifically is used to fund volunteer stipends and allowances, management salaries, medical supplies for women's centres, gender-based violence trainings and certifications, firefighting, search and rescue training, emergency funding, and more. While the Programme leadership for both of this Programme is based in Berlin, Germany, staff are located across the world and the team operates using a virtual office setup.

Your proposal should contain, but not be limited to the following considerations:

1. Eligibility - authorization by a statutory body to conduct audits.
2. Experience in relation to this scope for audits.
3. Confirmation of ability to complete the audit by 15 August 2023 and submit a final audit report by 22 August 2023.
4. Detailed audit plan.
5. Your fee proposal to conduct the basic audit function, along with your fee schedule for additional services that may be required beyond the scope of the audit engagement.
6. Estimated number of hours to complete the audit.
7. References from past experiences.

The final agreement will be in the form of a written contract following the standard agreement form used by Chemonics for contracting audit services.

We are targeting a start date of June 29th /2023, so please take this into consideration when submitting your proposals. Proposals should be submitted on or before June 23th /2023.

Please email proposals to the attention of Elyssa Greenberg at WHAPPMU@chemonics.com.

Terms of Reference - Independent Financial Audit for CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence Programme

1. Introduction

1.1. Background summary

The CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme maintains the delivery of essential services for 4.1 million host community and internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northwest Syria. The Programmes provide financial support and capacity-strengthening assistance to the Syria Civil Defence to achieve this goal through a subaward mechanism. In March 2023, the fund increased by 800,000 GBP through an allocation of emergency funding to assist the White Helmets in the earthquake that hit Turkey and Syria response efforts. The Programmes are being managed mainly from Berlin, Germany, but staff are located worldwide. Programme delivery is occurring in Northwest Syria. Funding is provided by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office in the UK. The CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme started on 16 May 2022 and is currently scheduled to end on 31 July 2023. The contract's current total value is £12,861,203, including £814,047 of earthquake response emergency funding. The Programme is part of a broader international donor group effort to support delivering essential services in Northwest Syria. As such, many costs are shared across multiple donors, but this audit will only focus on the Programme streams funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth, particularly the costs incurred after the last audit (conducted in March 2023), with particular focus on the emergency funding.

Chemonics is seeking an external audit expert to carry out an audit of this programme. The audit will cover the period 01 March 2023 to 31 July 2023.

1.2. Audit Objective

The objective of the audit of the Financial Statements is to enable the auditor to express a professional opinion on the financial position of the Programmes and of the funds received and expenditures for the reporting period, as reported by the Chemonics and, in particular, to confirm that the reported expenditure has, in all material respects, been used in conformity with the provisions of the Head Contract, including any amendments thereto as contained in implementation letters, and any applicable guidelines in force and applicable to the audit scope, and with due attention to economy and efficiency.

The Audit needs to review and confirm that the Financial Statements agree with the Programme accounts (books of account), which provide the basis for preparation of the Financial Statements and are established to reflect the financial transactions in respect of the Programmes, as maintained by the Company.

The audit must also confirm that the Financial Statements agree or reconcile with any other information reported to FCDO.

2. Scope

The audit will be carried out in accordance with international standards of auditing. It will include such tests and controls as the auditor considers necessary, including a virtual review of files and other relevant documents. Representative sampling may be used as the auditor considers necessary. This exercise is required to give full and satisfactory audit discharge to the Programme expenditure from a Specific focus will be:

- To establish that the funds have been recorded and funds have been expended in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract.
- Items and services have been procured in accordance with the guidelines included in the contract.
- Necessary supporting documents, records and accounts have been kept in respect of Programme expenditure.
- To establish the physical existence of FCDO -funded Programme assets per the asset register, their conditions and locations.
- Whether the systems, procedures and controls, contractual or otherwise, adopted by CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme are efficient, effective and transparent.
- Whether these systems, procedures and controls enable CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme to discharge its contractual obligations to FCDO including its financial and Programme management obligations.
- Whether improvements to CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme systems, procedures, and controls can be made as a result of the findings of this audit.
- Whether the funds in CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme account was deposited, transferred, and expensed properly in compliance with FCDO guidelines and other relevant financial policies and procedures as stipulated under the contract.

3. Methodology

The approach should include but not be limited to:

- Hold separate pre-engagement meetings with the Company to present an outline of the planned approach for conducting the exercise.
- Request and hold formal interviews with the CSSF: Support to Syria Civil Defence 22-23 Programme teams and Programme management unit (PMU) with a view to forming an understanding on the effectiveness of the internal control system in the management of the Programme.
- Examination of the financial transactions of the Programme under the management of the Company for the above period in line with expectations set out in the Programme documents listed below (to be made available after the contract has been let). Note that the financial records would consist of all documents relevant to the raising of an invoice; for personnel, this would mean being supported by timesheets rather than the actual invoices from consultants:
 - The Head Contract
 - Amendments to the Company's head contract,
 - Any other formal correspondence between FCDO and the Company, which may have an effect on the focus, direction, and expenditure activities of the programme.
- Review and vet invoices for fees and reimbursable expenses by the Company and ascertain that:
 - The basis for which invoices have been calculated are in line with obligations within the Company's Head contract.

- Deliverables from short- and long-term consultancies were properly delivered and received before relevant costs were charged to FCDO.
- Duly authorised time sheets are available for consulting days charged to FCDO during the period under review.
- Review the procurement process and procedures for all short-term contracts for the period under review and ascertain that:
 - Transparent and open systems are in place to ensure negotiations for contracts (services, works and printing) are competitive and represent good value for money.
 - Appropriate procedures are in place to document and manage conflicts of interest that may arise from related party transactions.
- Express an opinion on the cost-effectiveness, accuracy, and completeness (i.e., value for money) of the financial transactions for the period under review.
- Review the grant system and procedures set in place.
- Prepare a Programmes expenditure report showing receipts and expenditure summaries from 01 March 2023 to 31 July 2023 and express an opinion on the financial transactions for the period covered.
- Bring to the attention of Chemonics, FCDO on any suspected fraud or irregularity that arises during the audit and communicate matters that have come to attention during the audit, which might have a significant impact on the implementation of the Programme.

4. Deliverables

- Audited financial report (hard and soft copies) for the period noted.
- A management letter, which should highlight observed weaknesses in the system of internal control and the recommendations for managing the identified issues over the life of the programme.
- A statement of compliance with FCDO terms and conditions as contained in the Company's contract.
- A verification report on programme funded assets.

5. Timing

The work is expected to commence no later than June 29th, 2023. The audit firm is expected to submit the first draft of the report by August 15th, 2023, and the final report not later than August 22nd, 2023.