

TERMS OF REFERENCE

WASH OFFICER/Solar Engineering Expert – P3 Level

Background

Following the armed conflict in Mali, more than 56,000 refugees are currently living in Mberra Camp, Mauritania. Despite the conclusion of a peace agreement in 2015, large-scale returns of Malian refugees are not expected due to persistent violence in northern Mali. Embracing the humanitarian-to-development nexus in light of the protracted situation, the operation is moving towards solarizing the water supply system. A feasibility study has already been conducted and an implementing donor was identified wishing to move forward with the implementation as soon as possible. However, due to the operation's and the donor's lack of capacity regarding solar engineering expertise, a WASH officer with that expertise is requested in order to oversee adequate implementation, provide technical backstopping and advice and thereby significantly mitigate financial and reputational risks for UNHCR.

Mission

The WASH Officer/Solar Engineering Expert will support the operation in Mbera camp to provide oversight and guidance on implementing solar power supply for the water supply system, building on an assessment study previously conducted and in close collaboration with the donor agency and the WASH implementing partner. This includes reviewing of designs and technical specifications and providing supervision and guidance on procurement, installation and configuration of the solar-powered water pumping system, taking into consideration relevant sustainability aspects. The WASH Officer/Solar Engineering Expert will ensure smooth transition from fuel-powered to solar-powered water supply and build capacity on operating and maintaining the solar-powered water supply system.

Duty Station: Bassikounou (Mauritania) & home-based

Key Responsibilities

1. Leadership and Coordination

- Act as a focal point for WASH issues within UNHCR operational areas as directed and liaise with UNHCR country office, UN and international agencies, Government and Non-governmental counterparts.
- Coordinate and co-lead with ACF the WASH sector Working Group under the Refugee Coordination Model (RCM) and ensure sector members participate actively and cooperate towards the humanitarian-development nexus.

2. WASH Strategy, Planning and Programme Support

- Advise Programme staff and managers on the strategic development of WASH aspects of the Programme.
- Advocate, help and support the development of new policies and strategies for UNHCR in light of solarizing water supply systems in camps and settlements.
- Contribute to the budgeting, planning, programmatic processes and financial management of the operation in the sector WASH as applicable.
- Advise and assist the UNHCR programme staff on the development of a potential water recovery strategy in Mbera camp.
- Provide technical advice and inputs for the WASH aspects in the development of a spatial plan in Mbera camp.

- Review WASH investment plan for Mbera camp by partner and implementation so far. Make recommendations where necessary.
- Oversee delivery of WASH services for persons of concern in Mbera camp including water for gardens and livelihood activities.
- Support implementation of solar-powered water supply in Mbera camp in close collaboration with the donor and implementing partners.
- Manage Project Partner Agreements (PPA) for UNHCR WASH Partners. This includes Partner management, and monitoring of implementation activities on site.

3. Technical Assistance and Capacity Building

- Provide technical guidance and support to the water-resource optimization strategy implemented by WASH partners.
- Provide technical guidance and support to partners especially on questions of solar engineering in light of solar-powered water supply to ensure quality, cost-effectiveness, sustainability and impact soundness in the implementation of solarizing activities and in accordance with UNHCR policies, standards and priorities.
- Jointly with technical staff of implementing partners and other WASH actors, update detailed needs and resource assessments and revise designs of technical plans as necessary, taking into account practical aspects of implementation, long-term sustainable solutions, and relevant technical specifications and guidelines.
- Facilitate capacity strengthening activities of national UNHCR staff responsible for WASH activities and of staff implementing/operational partners' staff in light of adequate operation and maintenance of the newly installed solarized water supply system ensuring sustainable water supply to refugees in Mbera camp.
- Technical support for donor visits, as required.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Quality Assurance

- Facilitate adoption of methodologies for monitoring and reporting.
- Support the UNHCR WASH field team to supervise and monitor the field implementation of the solar water pumping project.
- Ensure that mechanisms to monitor the performance of UNHCRs partners on WASH activities in Mbera camp is in place.
- Ensure that the WASH monitoring system data collection and reporting is carried out systematically, properly and timely with quality information

5. Reporting

- Report regularly on the implementation of solarizing the water supply system
- Maintain accurate records of all relevant WASH performance indicators.
- Prepare monthly sectorial reports and submit material for preparation of periodic project monitoring reports as required by the office at country level.
- Collate information on achievements, challenges and lessons learned in implementing a solar-powered water supply system in Mbera camp
- Perform other duties as required.

Expected Outputs

- Technical advice, coordination and oversight provided to overall WASH response in UNHCR area of responsibility.

- Technical advice, coordination and oversight on solarizing water supply system in Mbera camp provided.
- Requested reports on WASH indicators, gaps, opportunities and activity implementation through agreed reporting channels provided.
- Solar-power for water supply system implemented.
- Environmental and social impact caused by refugees' presence in hosting areas reduced.

Essential minimum qualifications, professional experience and skills

Academic:

University degree in Water / Solar/ Environmental / Electrical Engineering or related discipline (essential). Advance training in solar / photovoltaic engineering will be preferable. Training on solar water pumping desirable.

Experience:

Essential

- At least 5 years of progressively responsible functions solar power/ water engineering or a related field.
- Proven experience with Project Management and ability to achieve quality results, on time, and within budget.
- Proven technical expertise in the area of WASH and water solarisation, including programme implementation, technical designs, monitoring and coordination.

Desirable

- Applied knowledge in UNHCR programme management, project formulation, programme cycles and reporting standards.
- Previous exposure to UN sector approach, preferably both at the global policy level and at field implementation approach.
- Expertise in planning, formulation, implementation, monitoring and reporting on humanitarian operations.
- Exposure to UNHCR mandate, its priorities and principles.
- Prior work experience in North or West Africa.

Skills:

- Ability towards analytical and creative thinking for rapid solutions.
- High ethical and professional standards.
- Good communicator with strong interpersonal and negotiations skills to deal with persons of various cultural and educational backgrounds.
- Proven ability to deal with multiple tasks in a courteous and service-oriented manner in demanding working conditions that often have short deadlines.
- Team player with service-oriented attitude.
- Proficiency in basic computer software such as water/energy flow modelling software.

Languages:

- Excellent knowledge of French (written / oral / comprehension) is essential
- At least Working-level knowledge of English (written / oral / comprehension) is essential
- Working knowledge of Arabic is desirable

Reporting Line

This position will report to the Head of SO Bassikounou. On all technical matters, the position will also report to the Head of the WASH Unit.

Duration

3 months in close collaboration and eventual handover of all responsibilities to Field Officer/WASH.