# Terms of Reference

## 1. Consultancy assignment background

The Crisis Learning, Early-warning, Anticipation, and Response (CLEAR) project is an ambitious AI-powered ecosystem designed to revolutionize humanitarian emergency response. CLEAR addresses critical gaps in current humanitarian operations including lack of early warning systems, information overload, absence of comprehensive planning systems for rapid response, and critically, the limited capacity of field response teams to effectively utilize available data for decision-making.

The system comprises four integrated components:

1. **Advanced Crisis Detection Engine** - Automated monitoring and pattern recognition
2. **Anticipatory Action Platform** - Predictive impact modeling and scenario planning
3. **Rapid Cash Distribution System** - Automated vulnerability assessment and digital delivery
4. **Field Response Interface** - Unified dashboard and knowledge access system

## 2. Objectives and Deliverables

### Objectives

We seek an experienced product design consultant to lead the initial exploration and design strategy for CLEAR, with particular focus on designing data-driven interfaces that bridge the capacity gap between complex humanitarian data and field-level decision-making. The consultant will set the foundation for designing user experiences that make sophisticated data analytics accessible to humanitarian responders regardless of their technical background, and provide initial design concepts for how CLEAR will integrate with existing humanitarian information systems.

The consultant will conduct desk research and initial user research to help design the strategy development for the CLEAR ecosystem, focusing on creating interfaces between existing data systems to enable field teams to effectively utilize data for humanitarian response decisions. The work encompasses understanding current field-level data capacity limitations (including connectivity, hardware and varying levels of data literacy), designing intuitive data-driven interfaces, and providing initial design concepts for system integrations.

### Activities

To reach these objectives, the consultancy will involve the following key activities:

**Desk Research and Initial Capacity Assessment**

* Conduct desk and user research with humanitarian field teams to understand current data utilization challenges and capacity limitations with a focus on emergency response and early warning/early action
* Map decision-making processes across the crisis response lifecycle and identify where data complexity creates barriers to effective action
* Analyze varying technical literacy levels among humanitarian responders and design appropriate interface approaches for different user types
* Document current workflows and pain points where field teams struggle to interpret or act on available data
* Assess training needs and identify opportunities to build data literacy through interface design rather than separate training programs

**Interface Design Strategy and Prototyping**

* Develop comprehensive design strategy for translating complex AI/ML outputs into intuitive, actionable interfaces for non-technical users
* Create progressive disclosure frameworks that present data complexity appropriate to user expertise levels and build confidence over time
* Design initial wireframes and interactive prototypes for all four CLEAR components (Crisis Detection Engine, Anticipatory Action Platform, Rapid Cash Distribution System, Field Response Interface)
* Establish design principles prioritizing data comprehension, decision support, and capacity building for users with varying technical backgrounds
* Create responsive design framework optimized for mobile field operations in resource-constrained environments

**Integration Design Concepts**

* Provide initial design concepts for how CLEAR interfaces will connect with existing humanitarian information systems
* Design user experience flows that demonstrate data exchange between CLEAR and current humanitarian databases and reporting systems
* Create interface mockups showing how field teams will access integrated data from multiple sources through unified CLEAR dashboards
* Establish design standards for data presentation that can accommodate inputs from various humanitarian information systems

**Validation and Testing**

* Design and conduct usability testing focused on data interpretation capabilities among field teams with varying technical backgrounds
* Validate interface designs through scenario-based testing in realistic crisis response contexts

**Deliverables:**

**Desk Research and Analysis Documentation**

* Comprehensive research report analyzing the current landscape and field-level data capacity gaps, including personas representing different technical literacy levels among humanitarian responders
* Stakeholder engagement strategy for ongoing co-design and feedback collection throughout CLEAR development

**Design Strategy and Interface Framework**

* Initial interface design strategy document outlining approaches for translating complex AI/ML outputs into intuitive, actionable guidance for field teams
* Interactive wireframes and user flow documentation for all four CLEAR components, emphasizing data comprehension and decision support
* Initial design system specification including UI component library, data visualization standards, and mobile-first responsive design guidelines

**Integration Design Concepts**

* Initial interface design concepts demonstrating how CLEAR will present data from existing information systems through unified dashboards
* User experience flow documentation showing data exchange processes from the field user perspective
* Design standards and specifications for accommodating data inputs from various databases and reporting systems

**Prototypes**

* High-fidelity interactive prototypes of key MVP features
* Implementation recommendations prioritizing interface features that most effectively bridge data capacity gaps

**Implementation Guidance**

* Detailed design specifications ready for development team handover
* Specification document for the CLEAR MVP
* Implementation timeline recommendations aligned with 3-year CLEAR roadmap, prioritizing features that address critical field capacity gaps
* Training and onboarding strategy integrated into interface design rather than requiring separate capacity building programs

## 3. Institutional and organisational arrangements

NRC will own the intellectual property rights to all materials submitted by the consultants under the contract. The consultants must therefore ensure that they have possession of any materials provided to NRC as a part of the deliverable. The rights to reproduce the reports will fall to NRC and its contracted agents. NRC will be free to reproduce the materials at will and to grant reproduction rights.

### Duties of the consultant

Everything submitted to NRC must be the original work of the consultants. Any plagiarism in any form, or any other breach of intellectual property rights, will automatically disqualify the consultant from receiving any further payments under the contract by NRC, and NRC will seek to recover any payments already made.

Reports should be submitted in Microsoft Word format, in UK English. All text should be unformatted. Graphs or other graphical devices should be editable (i.e., not pictures). All references must be cited according to convention, and detailed in a bibliography, using the Harvard system as set out in the [UNESCO Style Manual](http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001418/141812e.pdf). All verbatim quotations must appear in quotation marks and must not be of excessive length. All data collected under the consultancy must be submitted with the deliverables, in a widely recognised format such as Microsoft Excel. Any use of Generative Artificial Intelligence tools to produce any content should be clearly signposted as part of the document, indicating the section of the document and the tool used.

The consultant will follow [Ethical Research Involving Children](https://childethics.com/ethical-guidance/) guidance on the ethical participation of children. In addition, all participants in any study or other interaction will be fully informed about the nature and purpose of the interaction and their requested involvement. Informed consent must be obtained for any photographs, audio, or video recordings, etc., in accordance with NRC’s policy on consent.

### Duties of NRC

This may include provision of transport, accommodation, materials, documents (including visa), arranging flights, assistance with workshops etc. Clarify what documents NRC will provide for document review, and when it will provide them. It must be made clear what costs will be borne by NRC and what is expected to be paid by the consultant and included in their all-in fee.

## 4. Implementation schedule and estimated inputs

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Month | Phase | Key Activities | Deliverables |
| Month 1 | Research & Analysis | • Conduct desk research  • Map decision-making processes  • Assess technical literacy levels  • Document current workflows | • Research report  • User personas  • Stakeholder engagement strategy |
| Month 2 | Design & Prototyping | • Develop design strategy  • Create wireframes for all 4 CLEAR components  • Build interactive prototypes  • Establish design system | • Design strategy document  • Interactive wireframes  • UI component library  • Initial prototypes |
| Month 3 | Integration & Validation | • Design system integration concepts  • Conduct usability testing  • Refine prototypes based on feedback  • Create implementation guidance | • Integration design concepts  • High-fidelity prototypes  • Implementation specifications  • Testing validation report |

## 5. Qualifications of the consulting company / sole trader

**Essential Requirements**

* Minimum 5 years experience in product design for complex, data-intensive applications with demonstrated success in designing for users with varying technical literacy levels
* Experience creating initial design concepts for system integrations and multi-platform user experiences
* Strong background in user research methodologies specifically focused on technical capacity assessment and skills development
* Portfolio demonstrating successful translation of complex data analytics into intuitive, actionable interfaces for non-technical users

**Preferred Qualifications**

* Experience with mobile-first design for resource-constrained field environments
* Experience with real-time data visualization

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

* Relevant experience in product design and data-driven interface design (40%)
* Quality and relevance of portfolio (40%)Cost effectiveness and timeline feasibility (20%)

# Schedule of Deliverables

## Commencement

The Assignment shall commence on **August 14th, 2025**.

## Period for the Assignment

The Assignment shall continue until **November 31st, 2025**.

The Assignment shall be provided on an ongoing basis up to a maximum of the overall financial limit for the Agreement or total number of hours indicated below and reflected in the contract to be signed.

## Schedule of deliverables

* Week 4: User research and capacity assessment completion
* Week 8: Design strategy and wireframe delivery
* Week 10: Integration design concepts and prototype completion
* Week 12: Final deliverables and implementation recommendations

# How to apply

Your quotation should be one package containing the following:

* Detailed CV(s)
* Portfolio showcasing relevant product design work

Examples of initial design concepts (optional)Timeline and budget breakdown including daily/monthly rates and expenses

## Manner of Submission:

Please submit your quotation in accordance with the requirements detailed below by email to: [ict.procurement@nrc.no](mailto:ict.procurement@nrc.no) or a sealed envelope to the Norwegian Refugee Council at the address:

Prinsens gate 2

0152 Oslo

Norway

Deadline for submission of quotations is at **23.59 Oslo time** **on August 10, 2025**. Sole traders or companies who do not submit their quotation by this deadline will not be considered.

When the bid is submitted electronically, please make sure you comply with the below:

* The following title shall be inserted in the Subject Line of the email: CLEAR Product Design Consultancy. Bid documents required, shall be included as an attachment to the email in PDF format and if there are multiple documents, they can be provided as a compressed ZIP file. Documents in MS Word or Excel formats will result in the bid being disqualified.

All inquiries and questions should be addressed to the above mentioned email address. NRC reserves the right to accept or reject the whole or part of your quotation based on the information provided. Incomplete quotations which do not comply with our conditions will not be considered.

**Suppliers will be required to sign and submit an** [**Ethical Standards Declaration**](#_h81c9fwxmbs)**, together with their bid**. Please sign the pages below.

# Ethical Standards Declaration for all Supply, Service and Works Contractors

We, the undersigned, (‘**we**’, ‘**our**’ or ‘**us**’) **CONSIDERING THAT**:

**FIRST**, we are bidding for, or entering into, a contract with the Norwegian Refugee Council (**NRC**) to supply goods, services or works to NRC (‘**the Contract**’).

**SECOND**, we understand that as a humanitarian organisation, NRC expects its suppliers and contractors to have high ethical standards.

**THIRD**, we understand that NRC therefore needs us to confirm that we adhere to the required ethical standards (‘**the ethical standards**’) by signing this declaration (‘**the Declaration**’).

**THEREFORE**, we **DO HEREBY DECLARE** as follows:

1. **Declaration concerning compliance with applicable laws and these ethical standards**

We declare that we shall:

1. Meet the ethical standards in this declaration (‘ethical standards’)
2. Ensure that any party representing us, including but not limited to:

• board members

• directors

• employees

• contractors or sub-contractors, and their employees

• consultants and sub-consultants, and their employees;

• other legal representatives

(‘our Representatives’) are aware of and comply with these ethical standards.

In the event that we, or our Representatives, do not meet the ethical standards at present, we shall:

1. Explain to NRC in what way we do not currently meet the ethical standards
2. Agree a plan and timeline with NRC to implement changes that allow us to meet the ethical standards
3. Provide regular updates to NRC on the implementation plan.
4. **Declaration concerning status**

We hereby declare that neither we, nor to the best if our knowledge our Representatives, are in any of the following situations:

* 1. Have made an offer, payment, consideration or benefit of any kind, which constitutes illegal or corrupt practice, directly or indirectly, as an inducement or reward in relation to the tendering, awarding or execution of the Contract.
  2. Are involved in any form of fraud, corruption, collusion, coercive practice, bribery, involvement in a criminal organisation or other illegal activity
  3. Are insolvent, in receivership, bankrupt, or being wound up
  4. Have suspended activities
  5. Are subject to legal proceedings related to 2.1
  6. Have at any time been found guilty and sentenced by a court, whether in the country of employment or abroad, for a criminal offence in respect of children or vulnerable adults
  7. Are engaged in:

• terrorism or the material support of terrorism

• the sale or manufacture, either directly or indirectly, of anti-personnel mines or any components produced primarily for the operation thereof

• the sale or manufacture, either directly or indirectly, of weapons

• the production of alcohol, tobacco, or pornography.

1. **Declaration concerning Conflicts of Interest**

We declare that neither we nor, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives have an undisclosed conflict of interest with NRC.

Where any potential conflict of interest exists between our Representatives and NRC or any NRC staff member, we shall notify NRC in writing of the potential conflict. NRC shall then determine whether action is required.

A conflict of interest can be due to a relationship with an NRC staff member such as family or friends.

We understand that if we fail to report a potential conflict of interest and are later found to have a conflict of interest, we may be removed from the NRC vendor database.

1. **Declaration concerning compliance with national law**

We declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives:

* 1. comply with all applicable laws and regulations in effect in the country or countries where the Contract will be carried out.
  2. comply with all applicable export laws concerning the country or countries where the Contract will be carried out.
  3. are registered with the relevant government authority with regard to taxation for the duration of the Contract.
  4. pay taxes according to all applicable national laws and regulations for the duration of the Contract.

1. **Declaration concerning compliance with labour standards**

We declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives:

We declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives comply with applicable national labour law standards and the International Labour Organisation Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Specifically, we declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives comply with the following minimum labour standards:

* 1. Working Conditions

1. All workers receive a contract of employment that is written in a language they understand.
2. All workers are free to leave after giving reasonable notice.
3. All workers have the right to join or form trade unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively.
4. No worker is required to lodge ‘deposits’ or identity papers or immigration documents in order to obtain employment.
   1. Wages and benefits
   2. Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week meet, at a minimum, national legal standards or industry benchmark standards, whichever is higher. Wages are always sufficient to meet basic needs.
   3. No deductions from wages are made as a disciplinary measure.
   4. Working time
   5. Working hours comply with national laws and benchmark industry standards, whichever affords greater protection. Whenever possible working hours do not exceed 48 hours per week (8 hours per day).
   6. Workers are provided with at least one day off for every 7-day period.
   7. Health and safety
   8. Steps are taken to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, associated with, or occurring in, the course of work, by minimising, so far as is reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment.
   9. Workers receive regular and documented health and safety training, and such training is repeated for new workers.
   10. Workers have access to clean toilet facilities and to potable water, and, if appropriate, sanitary facilities for food storage is provided.
   11. Accommodation, where provided, is clean, safe and adequately ventilated.
   12. Discrimination and abuse
   13. No worker is forced, bonded or an involuntary prison worker.
   14. There is no discrimination at the workplace based on ethnic background, religion, age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation.
   15. Measures are in place to protect workers from sexually intrusive, threatening, insulting or exploitative behaviour, and from discrimination or termination of employment on unjustifiable grounds, e.g. marriage, pregnancy, parenthood or HIV status.
   16. Physical abuse or punishment, or threats of physical abuse, sexual or other harassment and verbal abuse, as well as other forms of intimidation, are prohibited.
   17. Persons under 18
5. No persons under the age of 18 shall be engaged in work which is hazardous to their health or safety, including night work.
6. The working hours and nature of work of any worker who is under the age of 18 shall not interfere with their opportunity to complete his or her education.
7. **Declaration concerning the environmental standards**

We declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives comply with applicable national environmental law standards and with international environmental standards, to the greatest extent possible.

Specifically, we declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives adhere to the following standards:

* 1. We respect national and international environmental legislation and regulation.
  2. We ensure that production and extraction of raw materials for production does not contribute to the destruction of the resources and income base for marginalised populations, such as in claiming large land areas or other natural resources on which these populations are dependent.
  3. We take environmental measures into consideration throughout the production and distribution chain ranging from the production of raw material to the consumer sale. This includes reasonable steps to minimise negative environmental impacts (e.g. emissions, water usage, waste) and to use - where possible - sustainable resources. Local, regional and global environmental aspects shall be considered. The local environment at the production site will not be exploited or degraded by pollution and waste.
  4. We carefully manage hazardous chemicals and other substances in accordance with documented safety procedures.

1. **Declaration concerning protection from sexual exploitation and abuse**

We and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives comply with international standards related to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and sexual harassment.

Specifically, we declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives adhere to the following standards:

* 1. We take sexual misconduct seriously and ensure that any employee found to have carried out sexual misconduct will be subject to disciplinary action.
  2. We will ensure, that none of our employees engage in any sexual activity with persons (adult or child) in relation with this contract regardless of the age of majority or consent locally.
  3. We will ensure that none of our employees produce, procure, distribute or use sexually explicit material in any activities under the Contract or on any sites used under the Contract.
  4. We will ensure that none of our employees will exchange money, employment, goods or services for sex, including sexual favours or other forms of humiliating, degrading, or exploitative behaviour. This prohibition extends to any use of sex trade workers. If any sexual misconduct is found to have taken place, such employees face disciplinary action.
  5. We shall report any incident or complaint of sexual misconduct or child abuse related to the activities carried out under the Contract through NRC’s PSEA and Safeguarding Unit at psea@nrc.no.
  6. We shall report any known or reported sexual relationship between our employees and NRC staff to NRC.

1. **Declaration concerning protection of children**

We declare that neither we nor, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives are engaged in any practice inconsistent with the rights set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We commit to upholding international and national laws and policies regarding child safeguarding.

Specifically, we declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives adhere to the following standards:

* 1. We support and protect the complainant, survivors and witnesses of any raised incidents or complaints of sexual misconduct or child abuse.
  2. We will ensure, that our employees will not abuse or exploit children or act in a manner that may place a child at risk of harm.
  3. We will ensure that our employees are not left alone with children.
  4. We will ensure our employees will not ask children for personal contact details without a valid reason to do so.
  5. We listen, to the best of our ability, to children’s views and opinions and treat boys and girls in a manner that is respectful of their rights and dignity during the performance of the Contract.
  6. We shall report any suspicion of child safeguarding concerns through the Complaints and Feedback Mechanism, provided by the NRC contract focal point and at [psea@nrc.no](mailto:psea@nrc.no).

1. **Declaration concerning anti-human trafficking**

We declare that neither we nor, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives are engaged in trafficking in persons as defined in the protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons or the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Specifically, we declare that we and, to the best of our knowledge, our Representatives adhere to the following standards:

* 1. We do not solicit persons for the purpose of employment, or offer employment by means of materially false or fraudulent pretences, representations, or promises.
  2. We do not charge employees recruitment fees.
  3. We do not provide or arrange housing for employees that does not meet host country housing and safety standards.
  4. We commit to report any suspected violations of this clause to NRC immediately.
  5. We commit to make our Representatives aware of the trafficking related prohibitions outlined above and share the Global Human Trafficking Hotline Information with them (1-844-888-FREE, [help@befree.org](mailto:help@befree.org)).

1. **General**

We understand that:

* 1. The Declaration will be kept on file for a period of 10 years.
  2. The Declaration will be updated every year or more often as appropriate.
  3. We must inform NRC immediately in the event that there is a change to the Declaration.
  4. NRC may perform checks to verify that the ethical standards are adhered to and shall be granted reasonable access to our premises and to our documentation, computer systems etc, in order to be allowed to do so.
  5. In the event that NRC deem that we fail to meet or are not taking appropriate steps to meet, the ethical standards, NRC may immediately terminate any and all contracts and agreements we have with them and at no cost to NRC.

1. **Requirement to notify NRC**

We shall immediately notify NRC through the Complaints and Feedback Mechanism, provided by the NRC contract focal point if:

* 1. Any allegations of alleged corruption, sexual exploitation or abuse, or child abuse are made against us or, to the best our knowledge, our Representatives, during the Contract, whether relating to the Contract or not.
  2. Any allegations are made, or any changes occur, in relation to any of the declarations made herein.

**Signed on our behalf as follows:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Signature |  |
| Name |  |
| Position |  |
| Date |  |
| Place |  |