



Terms of Reference for the Feasibility Study Expert

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1. Context and background

According to the World Bank data 2021, Iraq has low labor force participation (39.5 percent), unemployment was high at 16.5 percent in 2020/2021, highlighting the constraints on the supply side of the labor market (i.e., employment creation). Also of concern is a relatively large under-employment (8 percent of the employed population reported time-related underemployment). The labor market indicators are even worse for the youth who constitute a significant share of Iraq's population, women face several barriers that hinders their contribution to family income and the labor market. Increasingly the existing financial and institutional capacities of public employment services are not sufficient to cope with the scale of unemployment. Moreover, low rates of female employment reflect not only a problem in the quantity of women in the labor market, but also the lack of diversity in the types of jobs available to women. Women work is limited to few jobs that are deemed socially acceptable for women. Furthermore, reaching out to female participants may require more initiative to overcome social barriers that prevent women from both empowerment and employment opportunities, especially in closed social environments that may require tailor-made solutions to each situation.

Youth unemployment and poverty leads to marginalization, and it directly threatens social and political stability and negatively affects the social and economic development process. The main reason behind unemployment is the mismatch between labor force supply and the quality and quantity of available employment opportunities in the labor market. Moreover marginalization, poverty and unemployment may be the main triggering factor for economic migration.

Background of the project

German executing agency	Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund Deutschland e.V.
Project name	“Increasing community resilience by empowering and creating risk-sensitive livelihoods for conflict-affected people in their communities”
Duration of the project	Nov. 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2027
Budget of the project	EUR 1,170.000
Project goals according to the application	<p>The overall objective of the project is to contribute to sustainable socio-economic development in North Ninewa Governorate, Sinjar district. Specifically, it aims at building resilient communities by supporting conflict-affected youth in their efforts towards adequate livelihoods and economic independence in the homelands. People whose basic needs are met, who are economically capacitated and empowered with income opportunities and independently secure their livelihoods contribute to stabilized communities. Through involving local civil society organisations (CSOs) the initiative will foster social well-being and economic independence in the communities, to promote the retention or return of young people to their home lands and decrease economic migration.</p> <p>It follows an integrated approach along the following intervention strategy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. improvement of livelihoods by creating economic opportunities for (Trainings, Start-ups). 2. improve sustainable employment opportunities through vocational training in relevant fields of occupation. 3. strengthening the private sector (SMEs) through apprenticeship 4. capacity building of CSOs as agents of socio-economic needs of the communities
Target groups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vulnerable individuals, in particular women and unemployed youth seeking means economic independency and migration. 2. Local business service providers.
Project location	North Ninewa Governorate in Iraq: Sinjar district, District returnee and host communities.

2. Purpose and objective

The purpose of the assignment is assessing the feasibility of the project proposal “Increasing community resilience by empowering and creating risk-sensitive livelihoods for conflict-affected people in their communities”, submitted to BMZ (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany) for funding.

The Feasibility Study will focus on the following objectives:

- Asses the project feasibility in line with the Bengo’s Guidelines on feasibility studies_2021-09 (Annex 1)
- Provide a sound basis for improving the project concept by clarifying prerequisites, opportunities and risks.
- Give advice on possible optimization.

To enable a closer focus on key Feasibility Study objectives, six OECD DAC criteria are defined:

- Relevance
- Coherence
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Impact
- Sustainability

Primary users of the Feasibility Study:

- Private German executing agency.
- Local project partners

Expected use of the Feasibility Study:

- Systematically check the extent to which the project approach can reasonably achieve the planned changes under the existing framework conditions.
- Increase the effectiveness of the project and help avoid failed investments at an early stage through shared learning from the findings.

3. Scope

The preparation of the Feasibility Study will take place in the period February 7th 2024 - 28th February 2024. The focus of the Study is on targeted project locations in Sinjar district, North Ninewa Governorate, that have been identified keeping in mind the following criteria: the possibility of co-financing and cooperation with the civil and private sector, the number of unemployed and the opportunities for measures to be undertaken by the civil society organisations.

The Study will cover a wide range of target groups - vulnerable unemployed individuals, representatives of the relevant public/private/civil sector, local business service providers and other relevant actors in the context of the project concept.

4. Evaluation of the planned project according to OECD DAC criteria

The following questions for the DAC criteria serve as an orientation for the content design of the study, from which the relevant ones can be prioritized.

1. *Relevance - To what extent is the planned project doing the right thing?* Does the planned project approach address a developmentally important problem or a critical development bottleneck of the partner country or project region? Are the orientation, prioritization, and objectives (approach) of the planned project aligned with the target groups and defined clearly? To what extent do the intervention objectives and design adequately consider the specific needs of the target groups and structural barriers in the project region, partner/institution, policy programs? Are norms and standards of the approach compatible with those of the target groups? Is the project designed in a conflict-sensitive way (Do-No-Harm principle)?
2. *Coherence - How well does the intervention fit?* How coherent are the planned activities with human rights principles (inclusion, participation), conventions and relevant standards/guidelines? To what extent are there synergies and connections between the planned project and other interventions by the same actor (organization) and other actors? What are the similarities or overlaps of the target group with the projects of other stakeholders in the same context? To what extent does the intervention create added value and avoid duplication?
3. *Effectiveness – What is the best project approach to achieve the objectives?* Are the cause-effect relationships (including assumptions) plausible? What negative effects could occur? Is the chosen methodological approach appropriate to the context and sufficient to achieve the project objective? Are alternatives necessary? At what level (multi-level approach) should additional measures be envisaged to increase effectiveness? How will changes be measured? Which indicators (fields) are more suitable?
4. *Efficiency - Does the use of funds planned for the project appear to be economical in terms of achieving the objectives?* To what extent can the planned measures be implemented with the budgeted funds and personnel in the planned duration? To what extent are the planned expenditures used economically and are the investments, operating expenditures and personnel in proportion to the intended goals?
5. *Impact (significance) - To what extent does the planned project contribute to the achievement of overarching developmental impacts?* What special contribution does the project objective (outcome) make to the overall objective (impact)? To what extent is the planned project structural, serving as a model and having a broad impact? On which levels will norms or structures be changed?
6. *Sustainability - To what extent will the positive effects (without further external funding) continue after project completion?* How can the sustainability of the results and impact be ensured and strengthened (structural, economic, social, environmental)? What long-term capacities are built up in the target group to be able to continue with the implemented measures independently? Which positive changes (role behavior, mechanisms, networks and others) benefit civil society in the long term? What risks (personnel-related risks for the implementers, institutional and contextual risks) influence sustainability and how can they be minimized?

5. Design and approach

The preparation of the Feasibility Study should follow OECD/DAC norms and standards. The data collection and analysis methods used for Study preparation have to be sufficiently rigorous to conduct a complete, fair and unbiased assessment. Multiple sources of evidence can be used to

address an DAC criteria question. Evidence sources are generated from existing data/ information or new data/ information created for the Study preparation.

Existing data will include information extraction (quantitative and qualitative data) from existing information sources, research on strategy documents (country and entity levels) in the field of labour market integration (with the focus on vulnerable individuals) and research on available labour market data to understand the context of the project intervention.

New data will include questionnaires/interviews with different groups of stakeholders from project locations and observations from field visits.

6. Workplan

Estimated total number of working days: 23 days:

FEASIBILITY STUDY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS		Feb. 2024
I STAGE Methodology development	Development of the Feasibility study methodology in consultations with Project Development Staff- documents for revision, interview, preparation of questionnaires for different target groups, study plan	X 3 days
II STAGE Desk research	Information extraction (quantitative and qualitative data) from existing information sources, research on strategy documents (general and regarding project locations) in the field of labour market integration and socio-economic development (with the focus on vulnerable individuals) and research on available labour market data to understand the context of the project intervention	X 5 days
III STAGE Field visits	Trip to project locations, questionnaires/interviews with different target groups from project locations and observations from field visits	X 5 days
IV STAGE Drafting the Study	Analysis of collected data and information from relevant stakeholders, preparation of the Feasibility Study Draft	X 5 days
V STAGE Development and Submission of Final Study	Finalization of Feasibility Study, incorporating possible comments and submission of Final version	X 5 days

7. Requirements for the Expert

Deliverables

The Expert will submit the following:

- A Draft and Final Feasibility Study (30 pages max).

The Feasibility Study should be structured as follows:

- **Purpose and use of the Feasibility Study**
Which project objective (outcome) is to be examined for its feasibility? How coherent are the economic contexts (sector, components, project regions) about this project objective? Which additional questions regarding the project conception and implementation of the application should be answered by the feasibility study? How does the feasibility study fit into the project planning in terms of shared learning?
- **Methodology**
Which participatory methods, instruments and resources are used for data collection and analysis? Which and how many stakeholders (backgrounds and interests) are involved?
- **Initial situation and problem analysis on macro, meso, micro level**
Which current problems of the target groups have been identified and are relevant in the project design? Which of the causes are prioritized and addressed in the project? Which local potentials, existing structures (institutions, networks, umbrella organizations and others) and social mechanisms can be built upon? Which gaps in the system have been identified? Are there approaches and results from previous development measures? If so, how will they be built upon? What other framework conditions, for example conflict dynamics, must be considered in the context of the planned project?
- **Local project partner in the partner country**
Which organization(s) was selected as the local project partner(s) and why? From whom did the project idea come? How is the ownership of the local project partner strengthened? To what extent are existing agreements between stakeholders formalized? Are there formal agreements between actors? Are the resources and strengths of the partners known individually and at the organizational level? Which relevant technical, methodological, and political competencies should be further developed individually and at the organizational level?
- **Target groups and other actors (at micro, meso and macro level)**
How and by whom are the direct target groups selected (based on which criteria)? What is the composition of the respective target groups? How homogeneous or heterogeneous are the target groups in terms of factors such as gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, language, capacities, and to what extent must the project take this into account? What self-help potential do the respective target groups have? How can local problem-solving capacities be strengthened? Do the target groups and other actors have a common understanding of the problems, prioritization and objectives of the project? Are there convergences or conflicts of interest between other actors? How strong is the support, for example in the form of the contribution of the different stakeholders to the project? What is their ability to influence the project?

- **Evaluation of the planned project according to OECD DAC criteria** (as described in section 4)
- **Recommendations**
 What concrete suggestions can be made or incorporated into the project concept based on the main findings and the evaluation according to the DAC criteria? Examples: Which components, if any, are missing in the project concept to make the cause-effect relationships more coherent and to achieve the planned objectives in a sustainable way? Which of the planned components are not suitable or could have negative effects? Which assumptions of the cause-effect relationships are sound? Which findings and project-relevant data of the study are suitable to be included in the project logic (results matrix of the project proposal)? What are the recommendations for possible indicators for impact monitoring and data collection?

Language

Feasibility Study shall be submitted in English.

Expertise required.

The Expert proposed for this assignment should have the following proven minimum educational background and professional experience:

Qualification and skills:

- University degree in economy, sociology, social policy, management, public administration, law, or equivalent (advanced degree is an asset).
- Excellent research skills, including data collection, analysis, writing and communication skills.
- Ability to gather information from key stakeholders and synthesize into succinct format;
- Fluency in English and Arabic Language.

General professional experience:

- At least 10 years of experience related to the issues of social development, social inclusion and employment.
- At least 5 years of proven practical experience in research related to civil social, economic demographic situation.
- Substantial relevant experience in the design and implementation of integrated development projects.

Specific professional experience:

- At least 3 years of practical experience in the development of research methodologies for data collection and analysis.
- At least 3 years of practical experience in producing research in English.

8. Evaluation grid

Nr.	Evaluation Criteria	Max points
1	Overall related experience: Similar assignments; Years of experience; Expertise regarding areas mentioned in ToR; Knowledge of social-economic development issues of Salaheddine	30
2	Methodology: Following the TOR; Proposal quality (organization and clarity)	20
3	Qualifications: Experts' CVs	30
4	Financial Evaluation	20
	Total	100
Notes: The minimum score regarding technical proposal evaluation is 50 points. Regarding financial evaluation, the lowest offer gets maximum of points (20); the second in row gets 10 points; and the third gets 5 points. If the financial offer is the same, they get the same score.		

9. Budget and payments

The Contractor is requested to provide ASB with a budget proposal regarding Experts' involvement based on the specific needs of the assignment as outlined above. Experts' involvement/fees should be inclusive of any other expenses relating to field trips.

Payments will be installed as follows:

- 100% final payment upon receipt and approval of a final document and invoice.

10. Submitting the application

Please submit your signed Offer in English by **04th February 2024, till 17:00 pm Baghdad time**, to the following e-mail addresses: nkhalaf@sunrisengo.org and countryrep@asb-me.org. The Offer should include CV, Cover letter (1 page max), Technical offer (not exceeding 3 pages) and financial offer (proposed budget of all-inclusive fee in Euro).

11. Annexes

- BMZ- Bengo Guidelines on feasibility studies_2021-09.