

Call for Expressions of Interest – Feasibility Study

Terms of Reference (ToR)

Purpose: Feasibility study to assess the proposal for “*Creating new opportunities and prospects for young jobseekers in northern Iraq*” for submission to the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Place of Assignment: Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Period of Assignment: 15 January – 6 February 2020

Malteser International the worldwide relief agency of the Sovereign Order of Malta for humanitarian aid has more than 50 years of experience in humanitarian relief and covers around 100 projects in some 20 countries in Africa, Asia and the Americas, annually.

In the Middle East Malteser International is operating in the context of the humanitarian crisis in Syria since 2012 implementing emergency relief measure in Turkey, Syria, Lebanon and since August 2014 in Iraq where the fight of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) caused a displacement of over 3.4 million persons inside of Iraq.

I. Background and Rationale

The violence between armed groups and government forces since 2014 in the Middle East region has resulted in the displacement of millions of people in need of humanitarian assistance.

Many Iraqis have lost hope and are unable to imagine a future for themselves in their country. By end of 2018 the number of refugees in Germany had reached 1.8 million, including 138,000 Iraqis.

Today, many Iraqis who are jobless are thinking about going to Europe for the hope of a better life. A study conducted by IOM and the UN Migration Agency in February 2018 found that among the many reasons for leaving Iraq, the lack of jobs and livelihood was the most prevalent, at 31%. Many young Iraqis see Europe as an ideal place to live, where they can live fulfilling lives, as opposed to their reality in Iraq, and are willing to face the life-threatening risks involved in getting there. Of the 675 returnee participants interviewed, 57% mentioned that they would advise family and friends to migrate to Europe, although they had experienced hardships in getting there. The reasons for this were the better standards of living in Europe, with 43% of them citing the European welfare systems, 35% citing the protection of human rights, 30% citing the relative safety, and 12% citing the opportunity to get better jobs.

Problem stipulation: Many of these individuals, who are jobless and considering leaving the country, lack the skills and educational background to get work, they have false perceptions of what it means to live as a refugee in a foreign country and have a limited sense of community within their own country. Of the returnee participants from the IOM and UN Migration Agency, 51.5% of the participants had either only completed primary school, had no formal education, or had some form of vocational training. Another 37.5% mentioned that they

had completed secondary school. Providing access to skill-building opportunities is a necessity for many vulnerable youth and young adults. However, that alone is not sufficient to provide job opportunities. Many of these individuals need facilitation in finding a career path and help in creating a vision for their future in Iraq. In the study conducted with returnees, 50% responded that they would have stayed had the same job opportunities available in Europe would have been available in country, and 42% expressed a desire to see the same educational opportunities available in the region.

The overall goal of this project is to contribute to the reduction of the number of Iraqis and Syrian refugees living in Iraq who immigrate to Europe, by providing hope and a vision for their future within Iraq. The project's goal is to improve access to long-term wage and self-employment of vulnerable host and displaced communities in Erbil Governorate.

As part of the proposal development process, BMZ requires an external study on the feasibility of the proposed intervention design. These terms of reference lay out the details of the assignment and the structure of the feasibility study report, which will be included in the proposal.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this feasibility study is to provide the Malteser International with a sound basis for developing a project concept, by identifying project prerequisites, opportunities and risks. This enhances project effectiveness and helps avoid bad investment decisions from the start.

III. Scope of Work

Specifically, the Consultant will assess the proposal in terms of:

- Technical feasibility, contextual appropriateness, proposed timeline and budgetary cost effectiveness of the proposed psychosocial support, skills development, capacity building and employment promotion measures;
- The criteria for selecting the local partners and the proposed cooperation framework with them, notably with regards to programmatic and financial monitoring and evaluation;
- The sustainability of the proposed intervention design and anticipated results and impacts.
- The OECD DAC criteria questions listed in the report structure indicated under Annex I

The Consultant is expected to apply, at a minimum, the following methods for his/ her work:

- Desk review of the project design documents, including technical annexes, and of relevant internal and external information sources such as the Iraq 2019/2020 Humanitarian Response Plan and the Iraq Reconstruction and Development Framework.
- Discussions with key Malteser International staff involved in the design, including the Country Coordinator and the MEAL & Grants Acquisition Manager.
- Key informant interviews / focus group discussions with representatives from the key stakeholders for the project, including the local NGO *The Critical Needs Support Foundation (CNSF)*, the Department of Labour, potential beneficiaries and technical experts locally active in vocational training and job placement.

IV. Process, including tentative timetable

The consultancy is expected to take between 10 and 12 days, depending on the amount of travel involved, starting earliest on January 15th, 2020. The first draft of the report has to be shared latest by January 25th, 2020.

Timeframe	Purpose/Activity
3 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Briefing of the consultant through the MI Iraq/CNSF team to gain an overview of the assignment and roles and responsibilities among the team member - Desk review by consultant of relevant documents provided by MI Iraq/CNSF team - Finalization of review methods developed and proposed by consultant
3 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site visits, meetings with partners and key informants in Erbil facilitated by MI Iraq/CNSF team
1 day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debriefing of MI Iraq/CNSF team by consultant on preliminary findings and recommendations
2 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report writing - Draft report shared with MI Iraq/CNSF for review
1 day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarification of open questions and incorporation of reviewers' comments - Submission of final report version

V. Deliverables

The consultant is expected to produce the following deliverables:

- A. Detailed work plan, evaluation matrix;
- B. Outline of the proposed, discussed and agreed upon methodology;
- C. Data collected (e.g. documentation of interviews with key stakeholders);
- D. Debrief after the site visits and meetings with partners;
- E. Feasibility study report (draft and final versions) structured as mention in Annex 1(max. 15 pages excluding annexes):

The report language shall be English and will be submitted to Malteser International by February 6th, 2020.

All documents and data acquired during interviews are confidential and solely used for the purpose of the feasibility study. Interview beneficiaries/partners will not be quoted in the report without their permission. The draft and final report as well as all material linked to the study (produced by the evaluators or the organisation itself) is confidential and remains at all times in the property of Malteser International and CNSF.

VI. Expertise Required

The Consultant should demonstrate:

- Excellent analytical and report writing skills and experience in elaborating feasibility studies for development projects
- Experience in working with the livelihood sector, preferably in skills development/vocational training and job placement including business start-ups.
- Ability to work with minimal supervision, under time pressure, to organize himself/ herself efficiently in the country context, and to communicate and cooperate effectively with partners with different operating styles.
- Knowledge of Kurdish and/or Arabic as well as excellent English writing skills are a requirement. Local candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

VII. Logistics and travel arrangements

- The review process will involve site visits and meetings with partners in Erbil, KRI. A Consultant based in Iraq is therefore preferred.
- A Consultant based outside of Iraq is expected to have clarified in advance the visa requirements for travel to the project area.
- The field mission in Erbil, KRI, is anticipated to require no longer than 5-7 days
- The Consultant will be responsible for insurance coverage and all necessary equipment (e.g. computer) as well as communication costs
- Malteser International will arrange and cover all local travel arrangements. The Consultant will be responsible to arrange for and cover international travel as well as accommodation and hospitality. These costs will need to be a part of the total financial offer.
- Malteser International/CNSF will be responsible to organize interviews with stakeholders, as recommended and aligned with the consultant
- Malteser International/CNSF will make available all necessary background documents and project design materials upon contract signature with the Consultant

VIII. Expressions of Interest

Interested candidates should submit an expression of interest including the following:

- Technical offer including description of tentative methodology and work plan not exceeding 12 days
- Financial offer with a detailed price schedule including costs for international travel and accommodation (if applicable); all prices should be quoted in USD.
- Information on previous experience, including CV, 2 references and two recent examples of comparable studies conducted by the applicant
- Information on availability for the assignment

Malteser International may at its own discretion extend this deadline for the submission of proposals. The final selection of proposals will be in accordance with the proposals evaluation procedures of Malteser International.

Annex 1: Guidance note for Feasibility Study Template

If possible, the study should follow the structure set out below. The key questions under each heading need not be used in full. They are intended to provide guidance and should be seen as a set of questions from which to select priority questions addressing the focus of the study.

Table of contents (lists of maps/ figures, acronyms)

Executive summary (background, key findings and recommendations)

1. Introduction

1.1 Summary of the proposed intervention

1.2 Purpose, objectives and utilization of the study

- What is the rationale or the specific reason for conducting the feasibility study, and what are its objectives?
- Who will use the findings? In what way? For what purpose? This question should be reviewed, in particular, with regard to potential utilization of the study for the development of project application, the project concept and for project implementation.
- What will be the scope of the study in terms of timing and geographical coverage? What specific (sub)areas or (sub-)sectors will be given special attention?
- What earlier experience from similar projects and programs and from other studies and analyses etc. should be used as a basis for drawing up the feasibility study?
- What specific recommendations can the study provide for the organization carrying out the project with a view to planning and implementing the project?

1.3 Description of the assessment process (timeline, composition of the team/ qualifications of the evaluator, external factors and their impact on the assessment process)

2. Methodology

- What methodology will the study be based on? (methods/ instruments, security considerations, partners met) What are the methodological limitations?

3. Context and problem analysis

- What is the (current) situation in the sector/region/country in question? What does the socio-economic, political and cultural context look like?
- What problems have been identified? What are their causes and how do they impact on the living conditions of population groups? Which population groups?
- What needs have been identified based on the problem analysis? How were these needs identified (or how will they be identified)?
- What is the background of, and what has led to, the planned project and its impact logic? Who proposed the original project idea?
- Are there any alternatives to the planned project or any of its components?

4. Project-executing organization in the partner country (local executing organization)

- Which local organizations are suitable implementing partners and why? How much capacity do these organizations have in institutional, technical, staffing and financial terms? 2
- What measures are needed to build the local partner's organizational and general capacity?
- To what extent do local implementation partners identify with the project (ownership) and are committed to making it a success?
- What is the relationship between the local partners and the target group/stakeholders? (Legitimacy)
- Is there an overlap or conflict of interests? How can interaction and coordination between the partners and the stakeholders be improved?

5. Target group and stakeholder analysis

a) Target group

- What is the target group for the project? What criteria are used in the selection of the target group? Are there possibly several target groups affected in different ways by the problems?
- How homogeneous or heterogeneous is the target group in terms of gender, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, language, capacity, etc., and how will the project need to respond to this?
- What are the needs of the target group? How can these needs be addressed?
- What is the role of the target group(s) in the broader social context? What conflicts of interest could arise between the target group and other, non-target groups as a result of the support provided through the project?
- What is the target group's potential especially with regard to ownership/initiative, self-help activities and local problem-solving capacity? How can this potential be strengthened?

b) Stakeholders

- Who are the main governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the sector and beyond – at the project location, in the project region and the project country?
- How does the planned project fit in with the government development strategy?
- What are the interests of the stakeholders? Are there any visible conflicts of interest? What interdependencies are to be expected between the project and other interventions/projects supported by the stakeholders? How will this be taken into account in the project concept?
- Do the stakeholders share a common understanding of the problem(s) and of the project objectives derived thereof?
- How strong is the various stakeholders' support for the project? How much influence could they exert on the project? Have the stakeholders already entered into any agreements?

6. Assessment of the planned project based on OECD/DAC criteria

(see <http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/49756382.pdf>)

a) Relevance: Are the planned project activities appropriate for addressing the problem?

- Does the project approach address a key development problem or constraint in the partner country or region?
- Is the approach in line with the needs of the target groups?
- What changes are planned to have been accomplished by the project after it has been completed?

b) Effectiveness: What is the most suitable project approach to achieving the objectives? 3

- Are the measures and the chosen methodology suitable for reaching the project objective? Should activities be planned at the meso and/or macro level (multi-level approach) in order to make the project more sustainable?
- Will use be made of synergies with interventions supported by other donors or programs?
- What measures does the study recommend with a view to achieving objectives?
- What impact logic/impact hypothesis should the project be based on? What could a meaningful logical framework look like, including suitable and informative indicators (presentation of a first rough draft of indicators and baseline data)?
- Who will monitor impacts? When? At what intervals? (Impact monitoring)

c) Efficiency: Can the objectives be achieved in an economically efficient way through the planned project?

- What financial, institutional and human resources will be needed?
- Will it be possible to implement the planned measures within the time allocated for the project and based on the resources that are planned? Will it be possible to achieve the desired impacts, and will all that be possible in an economical and efficient manner (in terms of cost-benefit ratio)?

d) Significance / overarching development impact: Will the project help achieve broader development impacts?

- Which objectives and impacts derived from the problem/needs analysis are to be achieved, and for what target groups?
- To what extent will the project have a structural impact, to what extent can it serve as a model, and to what extent will it have a broad-based impact? Would it be advisable to pursue a multi-level approach (micro, meso and macro levels) in order to increase significance and effectiveness?
- To what extent have aspects relating to gender sensitivity, inclusion of persons with disabilities, cultural sensitivity, conflict sensitivity and human rights been incorporated in the project's objectives?

e) Sustainability: Will the positive impact last after the project has been completed (without further external support)?

- How can sustainability of results and impacts be ensured and reinforced (in institutional, economic, social and environmental terms)?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of governmental and/or civil society institutions? To what extent will the project be able to build on local potential, institutions and procedures? What measures and instruments are best suited to harness and strengthen local ownership and initiative, participation, and capacity?
- Which socio-cultural barriers may impede the planned approach, and how can they be overcome?
- What negative consequences and impacts might result from project implementation? To what extent will it be possible to consider and address these risks in the project/project concept (e.g., Do No Harm approach, conflict-sensitive impact monitoring, etc.)?
- What risks are involved in project implementation (personal risk for those implementing the project, institutional and reputational risk, contextual risk)? How can they be minimized??

7. Conclusions and recommendations

Requested Annexes:

ToR

Composition and independence of the team undertaking the feasibility study

Evaluation matrix

Timetable and process of the feasibility study

List of persons interviewed/ participating

References

Methods/ instruments (e.g. questionnaires)

Logframe

Other