Call for Letter of Expression of Interest
Creating access to finance guide for MSMEs in Iraq

The “Financial inclusion for a new economic start and integration in Iraq” (FI) project is a multi-donor action commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the special initiative “Tackling the Root Causes of Displacement, Reintegrating Refugees/Partnership for Prospect,” co-funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.
The project aims to sustainably improve financial inclusion and access to inclusive financial services for vulnerable target groups such as women, youth, people affected by poverty, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, refugees and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The project has four Outputs, (1) “Developing inclusive financial services”, (2) “Enhancing awareness about inclusive financial services and the financing of renewable energies”, (3) “Strengthening the capacities of the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI) to promote and regulate inclusive financial services”, and (4) “Improving conditions for women-led businesses to access financial services.

Service requirements:

A key limitation for startups growth in Iraq remains the inability of MSMEs and entrepreneurs to access finance in its different instruments, given the need for collateral and other guarantees, banks have not traditionally been seen by entrepreneurs as a viable source of business capital. Other non-debt financial instruments are also seen as inactive and not accessible. Approaching venture funds or investors for example requires not just good business thinking but also persistence, negotiation skills and an understanding of investors’ needs and mindsets. Most entrepreneurs and MSMEs understand their own needs and constraints very well but often fail to acknowledge the requirements and limitations of the investors, creating deadlocks and breakdown of talks.
Therefore, to follow up with its mandate, and with the lack of a comprehensive source of information that can guide Iraqi entrepreneurs and MSMEs to access relevant financial resources, the GIZ’s “Financial Inclusion project for new economic restart and integration” project is requesting offers from national consulting firms to develop an Access to finance guide as a step to help the ecosystem in the mission of supporting the growth of Iraq's entrepreneurial scene.
The main objective of this consultancy is to develop a manual/ handbook that guides Iraqi MSMEs in their quest to access financial resources which help them scale up and grow. Those resources range from grants to debt and equity instruments.
The manual also aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

- Support MSMEs in comprehending basic financing/investments concepts and terms
- Provide MSMEs with an understanding of their financing needs in addition to guiding them to understand the value of their businesses/ideas.
- Provide MSMEs with an overview of financial services offerings available in Iraq and relevant to their needs.

Provide MSMEs with practical insights that facilitate their quest in accessing external investment for their business.
The consultant is required to conduct the following tasks in close collaboration with GIZ FI project:
A. **Preparations, including consultation and development of the guide’s structure.**

The company shall embark on a task to understand the current financial market system in Iraq and best practices in other countries. This covers literature review including GIZ previous guides and relevant studies and meetings with key financial services providers and relevant stakeholders. This will serve as a basis to develop a coherent work plan for creating the guide as well as for drafting a concept on how to update the information that will be generated through the given assignment. This could include linking the information generated throughout this assignment with existing online or offline platforms and/or partnerships with key stakeholders.

After the preparation phase, the consultant(s) shall focus on developing the general outline of the guide which must have the following components with partial content to be developed:

a) Introduction on basic financing concepts and terms including those commonly used by investors and ecosystem actors.
b) Financial instruments overview (incl. grant, debt, and equity instruments) and differences including advantages and disadvantages of each across the growth stages of MSMEs / startups in addition to its business and legal obligations.
c) Investor types and differences including advantages and disadvantages of each across the growth stages of MSMEs / startups in addition to guidance on how to approach the different investors. This section shall also include impact investors seeking social and/or environmental impact alongside a financial return.
d) A self-assessment tool for MSMEs that helps them identify the growth stage they are in and their actual financial needs. This could include a valuation tool that helps quantify their business worth and financial need / help entrepreneurs understand the thinking of investors.
e) A checklist to determine the best possible instrument/investments to be pursued for the entrepreneur.
f) An Investor Directory listing all possible financing options according to the scope agreed on. The directory shall include relevant information such as growth stage, sectors, investment ticket size, funding cycle, and application process in addition to contact information.
g) Relevant case studies including ones related to the different aspect of gathering finance from Iraq and abroad that can assist entrepreneurs in getting familiar with real case examples on how finance was accessed / what has worked / has not worked for other entrepreneurs. Case studies shall be imbedded in the different chapters of the guide.

Deliverables:

a. Paper of up to five pages outlining findings of consultations and literature review including minutes of meetings and a list of stakeholders met (virtually) in the annex.
b. Detailed workplan for the assignment including activities and timelines.
c. A concrete proposed outline and draft table of content including specific description of each chapter and section with an estimated number of pages. In addition to a proposal on the scope of the guide including target groups, instruments, and investors.
d. Proposal for a sustainability mechanism to update the guide easily and regularly beyond the initial outputs of the assignment, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of the different options in addition to the updating cycles and mechanisms including possible links to other available platforms.

B. **Development of guide's content**

After clearing the outline and table of contents with the GIZ FI project, the consultant shall start developing the guide's content. This stage is critical and needs precise alignment with the GIZ FI team and other stakeholders.

Deliverables:

a. Draft guide including all items listed in deliverable a) in Arabic.
b. Presentation to key partners and stakeholder on the development report.
c. Final guide submitted for approval (in Arabic)
d. The guide should include (but not limited to) the following chapters:
    - Introduction
    - Financial Terms and Concepts
    - Pre-funding

- Financial Instruments
- Raising Capital
- Investment Timeline
- Crowdfunding
- Leasing
- Factoring
- Angel Investment

C. **Translation**

In parallel to task (B), the consultant(s) shall start the translation process of the Arabic version of the finance guide. The translation shall take into consideration the complexity of some of the financial terms and concepts. The Kurdish and English versions will be built to be easily navigated by entrepreneurs across the country and from different backgrounds and growth stages.

a. Accurate text translation from Arabic to English.
b. Accurate text translation from Arabic to Kurdish.

Deliverables:

a. Translated Access to Finance Guide in English.
b. Translated Access to Finance Guide in Kurdish.
c. Glossary of key terms used in the translation.

D. **Design**

In parallel to tasks (B&C), the service provider shall start designing the guide to be visually attractive and easy to read. This is crucially important for the guide's success and includes graphical representations and vibrant tools. Depending on the proposal and agreement with the GIZ FI project and other stakeholders, the format of the guide shall be available as a well-designed, printing friendly version in addition to a database that includes the structured content that could be used to integrate with online platforms.

Deliverables:

a. Draft design submitted for approval for the offline version in Arabic, Kurdish, and English. (separately)
b. Final version of designed guide submitted for approval in Arabic, Kurdish, and English. (separately)
c. database that includes all content structured in way easy to integrate with other platforms.

E. **Undertake the digitalization of the guide in partnership with the selected partner/ host.**

Working hand in hand with the selected partner/ host, the consultant(s) shall finalize the digitalization and sustainability concept as well as undertake the development of the digital, interactive and bilingual version of the guide with the host. Based on discussions with the host and key stakeholders, the digitalization of the guide could be executed in different formats.

The consultant(s), in continuous consultation with the GIZ FI project, and working hand in hand with the host, shall deliver on the following tasks:

1. The conversion of English, Arabic, and Kurdish content of the guide into a digitally ready material that corresponds to the agreed upon formats and tools.

2. Support the host with general design and interactivity ideas in addition to ways to easily gather data to update the platform.
3. Provide advise on how to integrate the digitalized version with other content/ services provided by the host.

Deliverables:

a. Finalized digitalization and sustainability concept after changes taken into consideration (max 5 pages)
b. Digitalized content material.
c. The final product in corporation with the host: A functioning online, digitalized, trilingual and interactive finance guide ready to be used.

F. **Printing:**

After approving the guide by the GIZ FI project and relevant stakeholders, the service provider shall start with printing out the final guide as following

1. Print 200 copy of the finalized guide in Arabic language.
2. Print 100 copy of the finalized guide in English language.
3. Print 100 copy of the finalized guide in Kurdish language.

Certain milestones, as laid out in the table below, are to be achieved during the contract term:

Milestones/process steps/partial services	**Deadline/place/person responsible**
Kick-off meeting with FI Project	02.03.2024/Contractor & FI Project
Preparation: 1. Paper of up to five pages outlining findings of consultations and literature review. 2. Detailed workplan. 3. A concrete proposed outline and draft table of content including specific description of each chapter. 4. Proposal for a sustainability mechanism to update the guide easily and regularly.	10.03.2024/Contractor
Content Development: 4. Draft guide including all items listed in b) 5. Presentation to key partners and stakeholder on the development report 6. Final guide submitted for approval	15.04.2024/Contractor
Content translation: **1.** Translate the content to Kurdish and to English	15.04.2024/Contractor
Design and publication: 1. Draft design submitted for approval for the offline version.	15.04.2024/Contractor

2. Final version of designed guide submitted for approval (for the three languages, English, Arabic, and Kurdish) 3. A database that includes all content structured in way easy to integrate with other platforms.	
Digitalization	01.06.2024/Contractor
Printing (Delivered to GIZ)	30.06.2024/Contractor

Period of assignment: from 01.03.2024 until 30.06.2024.

Personnel concept

The tenderer is required to provide personnel who are suited to filling the positions described, based on their CVs, the range of tasks involved and the required qualifications.
The below specified qualifications represent the requirements to reach the maximum number of points in the technical assessment.
The below specified qualifications represent the requirements to reach the maximum number of points in the technical assessment.

Team Leader

Tasks of the team leader
- Overall responsibility for the advisory packages of the contractor (quality and deadlines)
- Coordinating and ensuring communication with GIZ, partners and others involved in the project.
- Personnel management, in particular identifying the need for short-term assignments within the available budget, as well as planning and steering assignments and supporting local and international short-term experts.
- Regular reporting in accordance with deadlines

Qualifications of the team leader
- Education/training (2.1.1): University degree (Bachelor) in administration, management, or any relevant field
- Language (2.1.2): C1-level language proficiency in English, Arabic language is a must.
- General professional experience (2.1.3): 5 years of professional experience in project management.
- Leadership/management experience (2.1.5): 5 years of management/leadership experience as project team leader or manager in a company

Designer

Tasks of key expert 1
G. undertake the tasks mentioned in (D. Design)

Qualifications of key expert 1
- Education/training (2.2.1): A relevant bachelor’s degree (or higher) in the field of graphic designing, IT, or any other relative field
- Language (2.2.2): C1 - level language proficiency in English. Arabic language is a must.

- General professional experience (2.2.3): At least 5 years of working experience in the fields of graphic designing.

Technical expert

<u>Tasks of key expert 1</u>

H. undertake the tasks mentioned in (E. Undertake the digitalization of the guide in partnership with the selected partner/ host)

<u>Qualifications of key expert 1</u>

- Education/training (2.3.1): A relevant bachelor's degree (or higher) in the field of IT, or any other relative field
- Language (2.3.2): C1 - level language proficiency in English. Arabic language is a must.
- General professional experience (2.3.3): At least 5 years of working experience in the fields of IT.

Short-term expert pool with minimum 2, maximum 3 members

For the technical assessment, an average of the qualifications of all specified members of the expert pool is calculated. Please send a CV for each pool member (see below Chapter 7 Requirements on the format of the bid) for the assessment.

<u>Tasks of the short-term expert pool</u>

- Undertake the tasks mentioned in A. Preparations, including consultation and development of the guide's structure and B. Development of guide's content.

<u>Qualifications of the short-term expert pool</u>

- Education/training (2.6.1): 3 experts with university qualification (Bachelor)in banking, finance, or any other relative field.
- General professional experience (2.6.3): 3 experts with 6 years of professional experience in the financial sector, banking sector, or with writing guides.

Short-term expert pool with minimum 2, maximum 2 members

For the technical assessment, an average of the qualifications of all specified members of the expert pool is calculated. Please send a CV for each pool member (see below Chapter 7 Requirements on the format of the bid) for the assessment.

<u>Tasks of the short-term expert pool</u>

- Undertake the tasks mentioned in C. (translation)

<u>Qualifications of the short-term expert pool</u>

- Education/training (2.6.1): 2 experts with university qualification (Bachelor) in English language, finance, or any other relative field.

    General professional experience (2.6.3): 1 expert with 5 years of professional experience in the English translation. 1 expert with 5 years of experience with Kurdish translation.

The tenderer must provide a clear overview of all proposed short-term experts and their individual qualifications.

Specification of inputs

Fee days	**Number of experts**	**Number of days per expert**	**Total**	**Comments**

Team Leader	**1**	**25**	**25**	
Preparations, including consultation and development of the guide's structure.	**2**	**15**	**30**	
Development of guide's content	**2**	**36**	**72**	In parallel with translation and design
Translation	**2**	**30**	**60**	In parallel with Development of guide's content and design
design	**1**	**30**	**30**	In parallel with Development of guide's content and translation
Digitalization	**1**	**15**	**15**	

The tenderer must provide a clear overview of all proposed short-term experts and their individual qualifications.
This expression of interest is a market search for qualified consultants and GIZ keeps the right to the appropriate selection of the best-qualified companies for future demand.

Interested companies must submit the above requirement forms via email to procurement.iraq@giz.de with the email subject name '' EOI-Creating access to finance guide for MSMEs in Iraq ''.

The deadline for submission is 12th February 2024 no later than 5:00 PM local time.