

## Call for Expression of Interest

# Supporting the Implementation of the Economic Empowerment Pathways (EEP) Pilot

**WFP/IRQ/2026/001**

### 1 Timeline

|                                |              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Posted                         | Jun 3, 2026  |
| Clarification Request Deadline | Jun 10, 2026 |
| Application Deadline           | Jun 16, 2026 |
| Notification of Results        | Jun 28, 2026 |
| Start Date                     | Jul 1, 2026  |
| End Date                       | Jun 30, 2028 |

### 2 Locations

- A Iraq
  - a Baghdad Governorate
  - b Baghdad Governorate

### 3 Sector(s) and area(s) of specialization

- A Livelihoods
  - a Self reliance
  - b Technical and vocational education and training
- B Social Policy and Advocacy
  - a Social safety nets

### 4 Issuing Agency

WFP

### 5 Project Background

Iraq's Social Safety Net (SSN), administered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) through the Social Protection Authority (SPA), is the country's main targeted social assistance programme. It provides regular cash transfers to vulnerable groups such as widows, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and low-income families, helping them meet their basic needs. The programme currently reaches around 1.5 million households, equivalent to nearly 9 million individuals. Despite its scale, the SSN faces several systemic challenges, including fragmentation, inefficiencies in targeting, and weak linkages with employment opportunities. Consequently, it has largely functioned as a consumption support mechanism rather than a pathway to self-reliance. Recognizing these limitations, the Government of Iraq (GoI) is working to transform the SSN into a more dynamic system that not only provides cash transfers but also

supports beneficiaries in accessing livelihoods and employment opportunities. The objective is to reduce long-term dependency on assistance by enabling individuals to develop sustainable and diversified sources of income, either through entrepreneurship or wage employment. Within this broader reform agenda, the World Food Programme (WFP) is supporting the government through an EU-funded UN Joint Programme, implemented alongside UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO). This programme, titled “Leveraging Effective Response and Accelerating Reform for Social Protection in Iraq,” aims to strengthen the overall social protection system by better integrating social assistance, social insurance, and labour market interventions, while expanding access to services for vulnerable populations. A key financing mechanism supporting this transformation is WFP’s Changing Lives Transformation Fund (CLTF). The CLTF provides catalytic, multi-year funding to pilot innovative approaches that help shift populations from reliance on humanitarian assistance toward resilience and sustainable livelihoods. It focuses on strengthening national systems, promoting economic inclusion, and supporting transitions to self-reliance. The fund also includes a strong emphasis on evidence generation, with a global research partnership ensuring rigorous evaluation to inform policy and scale-up. In response to a request from SPA, WFP is launching an Economic Empowerment Pathways (EEP) pilot targeting SSN beneficiaries. This pilot aims to test the feasibility of integrating economic empowerment interventions with existing social assistance. It is a government-led initiative implemented jointly by MoLSA/SPA and WFP, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and other institutions. The pilot is embedded within the EU Joint Programme and financed through CLTF, with a strong emphasis on evidence generation to inform future national scale-up. The EEP pilot is structured around three main objectives. First, it focuses on strengthening government capacity. This includes building institutional and operational capabilities within MoLSA and SPA to design and manage integrated economic empowerment programmes. Investments will be made in human resources, including social workers, as well as in systems for case management, monitoring, and implementation. Second, the pilot aims to improve household livelihoods by supporting beneficiaries to diversify income sources and enhance resilience. Participants will receive a sequenced package of interventions including skills training, provision of productive assets, coaching and mentorship, market linkages, and referrals to relevant government services and programmes. These interventions are designed to enable participants to start or expand microenterprises and improve their economic participation. Third, the pilot emphasizes learning and evidence generation. A robust research framework combining quantitative and qualitative methods will assess both outcomes and implementation effectiveness. The findings will inform programme refinements, provide a strong basis for government budget allocation, and guide policy decisions for scaling up the initiative at national level. The pilot will target 1,500 households enrolled in the SSN in Taji district, with a specific focus on female-headed households, women, and youth who opt to participate. It will adopt a self-employment and entrepreneurship approach, concentrating on high-potential value chains identified through market analysis. Importantly, the economic inclusion interventions will be layered on top of continued SSN cash transfers. This ensures that beneficiaries maintain consumption stability while investing in productive activities. Implementation will take place in two cohorts, organized into smaller groups and delivery cycles. The pilot is scheduled to run from June 2026 to June 2028 and will be implemented in six distinct phases, covering outreach, training, asset distribution, mentoring, and follow-up support.

## 6 Expected Results

The Consulting Partner (CP) is responsible for delivering a structured set of tangible and verifiable outputs, all aligned with the programme’s objectives and subject to formal validation by WFP before any payment milestones are released. At the initial stage, the CP will submit a comprehensive workplan and standard operating procedures (SOPs), clearly detailing key activities, timelines, responsibilities, and resource requirements necessary for implementation. In parallel, the CP will also prepare and submit a Government Capacity Strengthening Plan. Both deliverables must be reviewed and approved by WFP and the Project Oversight Team (POT) by June–July 2026. During the same timeframe, the CP will finalize and submit the complete Economic Empowerment Pathways (EEP) training package, including training curricula, facilitator guides, participant handbooks, business plan templates, and monitoring checklists. This package must meet quality standards, receive WFP approval, and obtain LVTD accreditation for the entrepreneurship component. To ensure effective delivery, the CP will design and implement a Training of Trainers (ToT) plan and conduct training sessions for 100 social workers and 20 agricultural extension workers from the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). These trainings must be certified by relevant institutions (LVTD and MoA), with a finalized trainer roster endorsed by MoLSA by July–August 2026. Additionally, the CP will develop and submit coaching and mentoring curricula and facilitation guides for approval by WFP and POT, with certification by MoLSA completed by July 2026. Simultaneously, the CP will carry out the registration, selection, enrolment, and onboarding of 1,500 SSN households across two cohorts, ensuring all records are documented and approved. Cohort 1 enrolment will take place between August–September 2026, and cohort 2 between November–December 2026. As part of the core programme implementation, the CP will deliver training to all 1,500 selected participants, supporting them in developing basic

business plans under the self-employment modality. This will occur between September 2026 and March 2027 for cohort 1, and December 2026 to June 2027 for cohort 2. The CP must provide WFP with attendance records, signed completion certificates, and finalized business plans. Following successful training completion, the CP will oversee the procurement and distribution of productive assets to a maximum of 1,500 households. Asset transfers will be conditional upon training completion and approved business plans, and will require legally binding handover documentation as well as post-distribution monitoring reports submitted to WFP. This process will take place from October 2026 to April 2027 for cohort 1, and January to July 2027 for cohort 2. To reinforce sustainability, the CP will implement a structured six-month coaching and mentorship cycle for all participants. This will be supported by approved coaching materials, detailed session records, and monthly progress reports submitted to WFP. Additionally, the CP will organize at least two business fairs to provide participants with market exposure and networking opportunities, with summary reports documenting results. The CP will also facilitate referrals and linkages to relevant government programmes and services, such as Mihaan, Riyada, Arzaq, ICBG, and social security schemes, while maintaining accurate tracking records and reporting these linkages to WFP as part of ongoing monitoring. Throughout the programme lifecycle, the CP is required to produce regular monitoring and financial reports in line with WFP's monitoring system and data protocols, including quarterly updates to performance dashboards. The CP will also deliver continuous capacity strengthening activities for relevant government staff, ensuring sustained institutional development and submitting periodic reports on progress. Finally, at the conclusion of the pilot, the CP will submit a comprehensive final report by January 2028. This report will present overall pilot performance, key lessons learned, participant testimonies, and case studies, alongside a detailed government capacity development plan to support scale-up. The report must comply with WFP and C4ED monitoring, evaluation, and learning standards and receive formal approval from WFP prior to dissemination.

## 7 Indicative Budget

-

## 8 Other Information

The budget should be in IQD and realistic.

## 9 Selection Criteria

| Name                                                  | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Weight |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Experience working with UN                            | Previous work experience with the UN in the past 5 years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 10     |
| Sector expertise and experience                       | The entity must demonstrate a minimum of five years of experience in implementing livelihoods, self-employment, or business incubation programmes in Iraq, including at least three projects focused on livelihoods, economic empowerment, or self-employment delivered within the past five years. It must also have managed at least one project with a budget of USD 150,000 or more. Additionally, the entity should have proven expertise in developing economic empowerment or self-employment curricula tailored to the Iraqi context, as well as solid experience in designing and delivering capacity strengthening interventions for government institutions. This includes at least two initiatives specifically aimed at transferring skills and knowledge to government counterparts through approaches such as training of trainers, on-the-job training, and structured shadowing support. | 45     |
| Cost effectiveness                                    | Budget & Cost Efficiency                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 20     |
| Local experience and presence                         | Existing office presence in Baghdad                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 10     |
| Accountability to communities and community relations | Proven experience in gender-responsive and age-inclusive delivery of livelihoods, economic empowerment, and self-employment projects in Iraq.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 5      |
| Project management                                    | All minimum staffing requirements as stated in section 7 (SOW Document) are met in the organization's team composition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 10     |

## 10 Attachments

| Description                                                                 | URL                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Project Proposal Template                                                   | <a href="#">Download the document here</a> |
| This is the NGO Self Capacity Assessment                                    | <a href="#">Download the document here</a> |
| This is Organization Profile template                                       | <a href="#">Download the document here</a> |
| This is the Scope of Work that includes more details and the links to the P | <a href="#">Download the document here</a> |
| This is FLA Budget Template                                                 | <a href="#">Download the document here</a> |

## 11 Concept Note Template

[Download the document here](#)

## 12 For more information on this partnership opportunity, and to apply, please visit

[UN Partner Portal](#)