

Consultancy notice & Call for Expressions of Interest:

**“Two (2) market assessments in Basra city and Al-Qurna district, Iraq”
IRAQ/RFQ/2019/023**

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in Iraq is soliciting bids from companies or sole traders (individual service providers) for the design and implementation of two market assessments in Basra governorate – one in Basra city and one in Al Qurna district

NRC is an international non-governmental, humanitarian organization with 60 years of experience in helping to create a safer and more dignified life for refugees and internally displaced people. NRC advocates for the rights of displacement-affected populations and works in the following six main core competencies: Shelter; Education; Livelihoods and Food Security; Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance (ICLA); and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).

NRC has been present in Iraq since 2010, and currently has offices located in Ramadi, Baghdad, Basra, Erbil, Dohuk, Hamam Al Alil, Mosul and Kirkuk. NRC has scaled up its response across Iraq to meet the large-scale crisis facing the country, reaching Iraqis with emergency assistance and supporting Syrian refugees as they live in exile.

Like most of Iraq, the economic losses due to conflict have been significant in Basra. The situation has been exacerbated by the decline in oil prices, resulting in a long economic recession in terms of non-oil GDP. The non-oil economy and sectors such as agriculture in Basra have been hurt through destruction and deterioration of infrastructure and assets due to lack of maintenance, disruptions in trade and deterioration of investor confidence. In addition, a gradual reduction in the water flow to southern Iraq’s marshlands has also contributed to migration from rural areas to the cities, heightening competition over jobs in the cities of southern provinces, piling pressure on already strained social services, and contributing to social unrest. Tribal dynamics and nepotism have shaped the allocation of jobs in the oil and public sector in Basra, fuelling further resentment and competition over employment opportunities.

The lack of employment and income earning opportunities in Basra governorate, especially among youth, sets the backdrop for understanding every other problem faced by this population, and colours every discussion of proposed solutions. To this end, through a UNDP-funded livelihoods project in Basra, NRC is seeking to address some of these fundamental challenges. In particular, it seeks to restore livelihoods and access to income through a combination of vocational and soft skills training, business support and job placements. The main components of this project are as follows:

- Provide grants to help existing or new businesses to expand and employ youth and women from poor households, rural-urban-migrant families, minorities and IDP communities.
- Provide small business grants to new or existing household-level micro businesses, providing vulnerable households with income generating opportunities.
- Facilitate market linkages between targeted businesses and buyers and/or suppliers, ensuring value chains are strengthened and made more sustainable.
- Build partnerships with private sector companies in growth sectors that could increase income generation for beneficiaries, as well as source local qualified labour or goods and services.

- Provide accredited vocational and on-the-job training (or apprenticeships) to improve the skills of target beneficiaries to match the needs in the local labour market.
- Provide training graduates with employment opportunities through job placements.

Against this background, **NRC is inviting Expressions of Interest from interested and qualified parties to design and carry out two market assessments to inform the implementation and targeting of abovementioned activities.** The assessments will analyse the local labour market (including skills gaps) and the business climate for micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the targeted areas of Basra city and Al-Qurna district. Findings from the assessment will guide key elements of project implementation such as beneficiary targeting, selection of business sectors for investment, training content development, and the identification of employers for potential participation in a job placement scheme. The contracted party will conduct two independent market assessments – 1 in Basra city and 1 in Al Qurna district, prepare an assessment report for each, and present their findings to the Emergency Livelihoods Cluster together with NRC's Livelihoods Project Manager.

OBJECTIVES

Main Objective

The main objective for the consultancy is to carry out two market assessments (in Basra city and AL Qurna district respectively) that serve to map out supply and demand in the local labour market and assess the scope of MSME scale-up and start-up.

Specific objectives

1. To assess markets (both supply and demand) in selected sectors with the potential for growth and promising income earning opportunities, including the business climate and potential for start-up and scale-up of MSMEs.
2. To assess the supply and demand sides of the labour market in both the private and public sector, including the identification of skills gaps and training needs among vulnerable youth and women from poor households, rural-to-urban-migrant families, IDPs and minority communities.

HOW TO APPLY

Interested parties can obtain the Request for Quotations, including application instructions, free of charge from the 06th of Aug 2019 until the closing date on the 19th of Aug 2019. The documents should be requested by emailing: iq.procurement@nrc.no with the following subject line: **(IRAQ/RFQ/2019/023 – Consultancy MA)**.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants are required to be registered as a company or sole trader and need to have the capacity to deliver the requested services in Basra governorate. International applicants will be responsible for ensuring they can access the targeted locations in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Those who already have registration, visas and/or other paperwork to access the targeted areas, and are able to start at short notice will be prioritised.

DEADLINE

The deadline for the submission of bids is **15:00 on the 19th of August 2019**. Companies who do not submit their bid by this deadline will not be considered.