

**TITLE: Midterm Evaluation of CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY OF IRAQ THROUGH EMPLOYMENT CREATION  
AND REVITALISATION OF LOCAL ECONOMIES – PHASE VI**

Commissioned by: IOM IRAQ COUNTRY OFFICE

July 2025

IOM Iraq

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Evaluation Context

IOM works on migration and development, facilitating migration, regulating migration and solutions for forced migration. IOM activities that cut across these areas include the promotion of international migration law, policy debate and guidance, protection of migrants' rights, migration health and the gender dimension of migration.

Iraq continues to face complex political, environmental, and socio-economic challenges that directly affect the effectiveness and sustainability of recovery efforts in conflict-affected areas. The country remains politically fragile following the defeat of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), grappling with governance challenges, political fragmentation, and tensions between federal and regional authorities. These factors contribute to inconsistent policy implementation, limited institutional capacity, and delays in economic reforms, all of which hamper efforts to rebuild communities and establish sustainable livelihoods.

From an environmental standpoint, Iraq is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including increasing desertification, water scarcity, and extreme weather events. These challenges severely affect agriculture and rural employment. Additionally, the environmental legacy of years of conflict including damaged infrastructure and contaminated lands further restricts economic opportunities and slows the pace of recovery.

Socio-economically, Iraq continues to struggle with high unemployment rates, particularly among youth and women. The private sector remains underdeveloped, characterized by limited access to financial resources and heavy dependence on oil revenues. Despite some progress in economic recovery, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and host communities still face significant barriers to securing stable employment, accessing basic services, and rebuilding sustainable livelihoods. Women, in particular, confront deep-rooted structural barriers to labor market participation, driven by restrictive social norms, limited access to capital, and inadequate support systems, which further constrain inclusive economic growth.

Displacement remains a persistent challenge, with approximately 973,000 Iraqis still displaced in various settings, including camps and informal settlements. The barriers to durable solutions are multifaceted, including destroyed or inadequate housing, ongoing security concerns, lack of basic services, and scarce employment opportunities. Returnees also face numerous obstacles that hinder successful reintegration, with limited access to livelihoods being a major constraint. This not only undermines their ability to meet basic needs but also weakens social cohesion within communities. Collectively, these challenges threaten the stability of return and reintegration efforts across Iraq.

### Summary of the project:

Donor	Project Title	Start date	End date	Total Budget
Germany - KfW – Frankfurt am Main	Contribute to the economic recovery of Iraq through employment creation and revitalisation of local economics- Phase VI	01-Jan-2024	30-Dec-2027	23,316,831.68 Euro

The project aims to support the economic recovery and stabilization of Iraq by enhancing employment opportunities and strengthening local economies in nine governorates. Building on lessons learned from previous phases, the project implements a multi-pronged approach that includes livelihoods support, infrastructure rehabilitation, and private sector development, with a specific focus on displaced populations, returnees, host communities, and those affected by climate change. Key interventions include short-term employment through public works, Individual Livelihood Assistance (ILA), Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) grants, and support to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) through tailored advisory services and access to finance. The project also integrates climate resilience, gender equality, and durable solutions into its design and delivery, contributing to long-term socio-economic reintegration and inclusive development.

***Objective: Contribute to the economic recovery of Iraq through employment creation and revitalisation of local economies***

- **Outcome 1:** Improved access in targeted communities to short- and long-term employment and income-generation opportunities through livelihoods assistance
  - **Output 1.1:** Communities are identified in a conflict-sensitive manner and engaged in the prioritisation of community needs.
  - **Output 1.2:** Individuals receive livelihoods assistance through Short-Term Employment for Public Works (EPW).
  - **Output 1.3:** Community members have increased income generation capacity through individual livelihoods assistance (ILA) and IOM's Graduation Approach (GA).
- **Outcome 2:** Contribute to enabled environment for economic revitalization through rehabilitation of relevant damaged infrastructure in targeted communities.
  - **Output 2.1:** Community-based infrastructure connected to the business environment is rehabilitated.
  - **Output 2.2:** Implementation of Sustainable Community-based Infrastructure Connected to the Business Environment through the Matching Grant Mechanism-Government (MGM-G).
- **Outcome 3:** Support and strengthened private sector enterprises in Iraq to enable their expansion of operations, creation of employment opportunities, and improved access to financial services.
  - **Output 3.1:** Value chains are strengthened, and job creation is supported through Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) grants for MSMEs.

## 1.2. EVALUATION PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The main purpose of this midterm evaluation is to assess how effectively the project has addressed the priority needs of the target populations—including IDPs, returnees, host communities, and climate-affected groups—during the implementation period. The evaluation aims to generate actionable lessons to enhance the quality, efficiency, and relevance of project implementation in the remaining timeframe. It will also examine the extent to which resources have been used responsibly and whether the emerging results are proportionate to the investments made. The findings will support IOM's Transition and Recovery Division in improving implementation strategies across livelihoods, infrastructure, and private sector support components, while contributing to advocacy, resource mobilization, and strategic planning. Additionally, the evaluation will inform evidence-based decision-making and help strengthen accountability to donors, government partners, and affected populations.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are outlined as follows:

- Assess the overall progress of the programme using OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, particularly against the indicators and targets defined in the project's result framework.
- Document important lessons learned and best practices to inform future programming and organizational learning, while supporting accountability for results.
- Evaluate IOM's and partners' commitment to transparency, accountability to affected populations (AAP), and cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, disability inclusion, protection and Do No Harm principles, environmental sustainability, and rights-based programming.
- Identify strengths, challenges, and gaps in project implementation and provide practical, actionable recommendations for improvement.

### 1.3. Evaluation Scope

The midterm evaluation will focus geographically on the nine governorates where project activities have been implemented: Baghdad, Ninewa, Kirkuk, Diyala, Salah al-Din, Anbar, Dohuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah. It will assess the implementation progress from the project's start date on 01 January 2024 up to the time of the evaluation August 2025. The evaluation will examine the project's overarching objective of contributing to Iraq's economic recovery through employment creation and local economic revitalization. In particular, it will assess progress made under the three core outcome areas, as well as relevant cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, protection mainstreaming, inclusion of persons with disabilities, environmental sustainability, and accountability to affected populations.

### 1.4. VALUATION CRITERIA

The project's performance will be assessed using the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, namely: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. In addition to these core criteria, the evaluation will integrate cross-cutting considerations, including gender equality, disability inclusion, environmental sustainability, and accountability to affected populations. These evaluation criteria and cross-cutting themes will serve as the framework for guiding the evaluation questions outlined below.

## 1.5. EVALUATION GUIDING QUESTIONS

### Relevance

- a) To what extent does the project address the most pressing SMEs challenges in the target communities?
- b) How well does the project align with local and national MSMEs regulations?
- c) To what extent were relevant target groups actively involved in decision-making concerning project orientation and implementation?
- d) What additional needs or gaps have been identified that are linked to core project goals, particularly MSME investment readiness and access to finance?

### Coherence

- e) How compatible is the intervention with other interventions in the country, sector, or institution?
- f) Has the project effectively collaborated with relevant stakeholders and partners to leverage resources and expertise?
- g) To what extent is the project aligned with IOM's institutional priorities, strategic objectives, and relevant frameworks?

### Effectiveness

- h) What was the overall progress towards the expected results, and were there significant challenges that hindered the realization of planned results?
- i) What were the components and delivery approaches that were most effective, and which were least effective?
- j) What needed to be done to improve performance to achieve expected results?
- k) Did outputs lead to the intended outcomes and results?
- l) What were significant factors influencing the achievement of project outputs and outcomes?
- m) Were monitoring and reporting systems adequate to track progress and inform adaptive management? How?
- n) Are there activities, strategies, or assumptions that need to be revised to better achieve the intended outcomes in the second half of the project?

### Efficiency

- o) Were project activities undertaken and outputs delivered on time?
- p) Was the project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternative means of implementation?
- q) How efficiently were resources used to achieve intended results in line with the implementation context?

### Impact

- r) What are the broader effects of the project on individuals, institutions, community groups, gender, and age groups?
- s) What are the intended and unintended positive and negative results at macro (sector) and micro (household) levels?

### Sustainability

- t) Are structures, resources, and processes in place to ensure that benefits generated by the project continue once external support ceases?
- u) What are the key opportunities and recommendations for next phase of programming?
- v) How far was the project embedded in institutional structures likely to survive beyond the project life?

- w) What key lessons have been learned during the implementation so far, and how can these inform adjustments or improvements for the remaining project period?

### Cross-cutting issues

- x) To what extent does the project incorporate a gender-responsive approach, promoting gender equality and addressing the specific needs and experiences of both women and men throughout its design, implementation, and outcomes?
- y) Did the program adequately apply 'Do No Harm' principles?
- z) How effectively does the project integrate and address the needs of individuals with disabilities, ensuring their meaningful participation, equal access to services, and overall inclusion in all project activities and outcomes?
- aa) What actual or expectable positive and negative effects are foreseeable on the environment?
- bb) Were relevant and timely information provided to beneficiaries about the programme objectives, time-frame, how to participate in the decision-making process, and how to provide feedback and raise concerns?
- cc) Did beneficiaries raise concerns related to possible violations of rights?
- dd) Was there a functional complaint and feedback response mechanism in place?
- ee) Have the current M&E tools been provided with the necessary information in line with the indicators? How was the information generated by the programme used to inform decision-making?

## 2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The selected firm will be responsible for designing a robust methodological framework and leading the implementation of the midterm evaluation. The consultancy is expected to adopt a formative programme evaluation approach, employing a mixed-methods design that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methods to respond to the outcome indicators and evaluation questions. The quantitative component will consist of a descriptive household survey, while the qualitative component will involve participatory community consultations, analyzed using thematic content analysis. The qualitative study must ensure the inclusion and representation of all relevant target groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, returnees, IDPs, and host communities. Methodologies must emphasize inclusivity, align with the project's objectives and scope, and be guided by the project components and targets outlined in the evaluation scope to inform sampling strategies and appropriate sample sizes.

To ensure a comprehensive and contextually grounded evaluation, the process will actively engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders involved in the implementation and outcomes of the project. This includes government counterparts such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD), Ministry of Planning (MoP), the KRG Ministry of Interior, and the Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCC), as well as provincial and local authorities. The evaluation will also engage private sector actors, chambers of commerce, civil society organizations (CSOs), community leaders, SMEs supported through the Enterprise Development Fund (EDF), and individual beneficiaries of livelihoods and cash-for-work assistance. Coordination with relevant UN partners and international stakeholders involved in economic recovery and durable solutions will be essential to capture the broader impact and inter-agency dynamics of the project.

The methodology will include Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with IOM project staff, government authorities, local partners, private sector actors, community leaders, and international partners. Additionally, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured interviews will be conducted with selected project beneficiaries, including individuals who received livelihoods support, EDF grants, and short-term employment through cash-for-work schemes, as well as

members of the host communities. These consultations will examine the project’s responsiveness to community needs, expectations, and priorities, with particular focus on economic recovery, job creation, and the sustainability of livelihoods.

The evaluation process must adhere to IOM’s Data Protection Principles, Code of Conduct, the “Do No Harm” principle, and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluations. The evaluation must apply conflict-sensitive, protection-sensitive, and inclusive approaches, particularly when engaging vulnerable groups such as IDPs, returnees, women, and persons with disabilities. The safety, dignity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation of all respondents must be prioritized to avoid harm or the exacerbation of existing vulnerabilities.

Technical oversight will be provided by the IOM Iraq MEAL team and the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG), with additional consultation from the PMR Officer at IOM’s Regional Office in Cairo, as required. Evaluation findings will contribute to organizational learning, accountability, and inform the design of future resilience-building and economic recovery interventions in Iraq.

To ensure contextual relevance, accessibility, and strong local engagement, the evaluation team is encouraged to partner with qualified local consultants or field researchers based in Iraq. Data collection will be conducted primarily through in-person interviews and direct engagement with project stakeholders and communities.

### 3. ETHICS, NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR EVALUATION

The evaluation process must adhere to IOM’s Data Protection Principles, Code of Conduct, the “Do No Harm” principle, and the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluations. Special care will be taken to ensure that the evaluation applies conflict-sensitive, protection-sensitive, and inclusive approaches, particularly when engaging with vulnerable groups such as internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, and persons with disabilities. The process will prioritize the safety, dignity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation of all respondents, ensuring that the evaluation does not cause harm or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.

#### Summary of the Evaluation Methodology and Data Collection Tools

Table 01: Evaluation Methodology and Data Collection Tools

Method	Tasks	Tools required	Products
Desk study	Review project reports, mid-term evaluation, assessments, selection criteria, work plans and other documents.	Evaluation rubric <sup>1</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation strategies identification.</li> <li>• Identification of progress and challenges</li> <li>• Key project components implemented, and result achieved</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Evaluative rubric is a qualitative data assessment tool which involves articulating things that matter in the initiative being evaluated in line with the performance quality standard in project activities, their delivery strategies and resultant products or services predefined according to the evaluation purpose. See also: [http://carla.umn.edu/assessment/vac/improvement/p\\_4.html](http://carla.umn.edu/assessment/vac/improvement/p_4.html).

Method	Tasks	Tools required	Products
Key Informant Interviews	The evaluation will involve conducting Key Informant Interviews with a range of stakeholders, including IOM programme staff, as well as representatives from key government counterparts such as MoLSA, MoMD, MoP, the KRG Joint Crisis Coordination Centre JCC, and relevant provincial and local authorities. Additionally, KIIs will be conducted with private sector actors, chambers of commerce, civil society organizations, community leaders, and United Nations agencies involved in livelihoods, economic recovery, and durable solutions programming. The selection of interviewees will aim to capture a balanced perspective on project relevance, effectiveness, coordination, and emerging impact across the nine governorates of implementation. <u>A minimum of 30 KIIs will be conducted across the project locations.</u>	Key informant interview guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative data on project processes and performance about target results</li> <li>• Insight on the view of problems and recommended solutions.</li> <li>• Different perspectives on issues</li> </ul>
On-site observation	Conduct field visits, observation of project activities and sites. Sample size is identified under the Beneficiary Interviews and surveys	Observation Checklist	Qualitative data/cues about Project contexts/challenges as well as risks
Focus group discussion	FGDs will be conducted to capture beneficiary and community stakeholder perspectives on the project's engagement processes, implementation quality, and responsiveness to local needs and expectations. The FGDs will generate in-depth qualitative insights into participants' experiences with key components of the project, including ILA, CfW opportunities, EDF support, and community infrastructure rehabilitation, and members of host communities. A total of 12 to 15 FGDs will be carried out across the project's target locations, with careful attention to ensuring gender- and age-sensitive participation, and the inclusion of vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities.	Focus group discussion guide	An in-depth qualitative information
Household Survey	Surveys will be conducted with direct project beneficiaries, including recipients of Individual Livelihood Assistance (ILA), Cash-for-Work (CfW), and Enterprise Development Fund (EDF) support, to assess their satisfaction with the services received, perceived improvements in livelihoods, and overall perceptions of the project's relevance, effectiveness, and responsiveness to	Structured questionnaire	Quantitative information

Method	Tasks	Tools required	Products
	<p>their needs. A statistically representative sample will be selected using a 95% confidence level, 50% population proportion, a 5% margin of error, with a 1.5 design effect and a 5% non-response rate. <u>Approximately 607 surveys will be conducted with direct beneficiaries across the nine governorates targeted by the project.</u></p>		

#### 4. EVALUATION DELIVERABLES

The evaluator is expected produce:

- (1) Inception report as per the IOM template including a detailed workplan, data collection plan, data collection tools and/materials/templates.
- (2) Sharing all the data collected from the different sources in a clean, well-formatted standard.
- (3) Briefing and debriefing meetings on the evaluation results in addition to the routine meetings and discussions with IOM.
- (4) A first draft final evaluation report (strictly based on IOM template, incorporating comments and technical inputs from the IOM reference group) along with datasets from data collected in a clean, well-formatted standard. with a two-pager summary evaluation brief, and a management response matrix (MRM) as per (IOM template followed.
- (5) A final meeting with IOM Team to present the key findings.
- (6) Updates Results Framework that clearly shows the status/value of Project indicators visa-vis the targets.

#### 5. SPECIFICATIONS OF ROLES

The Evaluator(s) or Evaluation Team will be responsible for leading the evaluation process, including designing the methodology, developing the inception report, and conducting data collection and analysis in line with the agreed approach. They will ensure strict adherence to ethical and quality standards, particularly IOM's Data Protection Principles and the UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation. The team will deliver all required outputs such as the inception report, draft and final evaluation reports, and presentations and actively participate in meetings with IOM and relevant stakeholders. All reporting must strictly adhere to IOM's official reporting templates and formats. Regular communication and coordination with IOM focal points will be maintained throughout the evaluation to ensure alignment and responsiveness.

The Evaluation Manager, will oversee the entire evaluation process on behalf of IOM, ensuring that all activities align with organizational procedures and quality expectations. The Evaluation Manager will manage the recruitment and contracting of the evaluator(s), and serve as the primary liaison between the evaluators, and program teams, They will facilitate access to necessary project documents, coordinate the internal review of key deliverables such as the inception and final reports, and ensure the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms at all critical stages of the evaluation.



## 6. EVALUATION PROPOSED WORKPLAN

Table 02: The Evaluation proposed work plan

Activity	Responsible	Estimated Timeframes	Data Analysis	Aug 2025	Sep 2025	Oct 2025
Kick-off meeting	IOM	To be completed by 26th Aug 2025	Remote	X		
Desk review of project documents, partners documents, reports, and others	Evaluation firm	Starting from Aug 26 <sup>th</sup>	Remote	X		
Inception process: Development/submission of inception report/work plan and data collection tools	Evaluation firm & (IOM for Review)	1st version of inception report is sent to IOM on 4 <sup>th</sup> September.	Remote		X	
Inception report initial MEAL review	IOM MEAL	7 <sup>th</sup> September to 8 <sup>th</sup> September	Remote		X	
Reflection of initial comment of MEAL if any	Evaluation firm	September 8 <sup>th</sup> to September 9 <sup>th</sup>	Remote		X	
IOM program team review inception report	IOM	September 10 <sup>th</sup> to September 17 <sup>th</sup>				
Inception report finalized incorporating IOM feedback, and final inception report package inclusive of data collection plans shared with IOM	Evaluation firm	24 <sup>th</sup> September	Remote		X	
Data collection tools translation and training of enumerators	Evaluation firm	September 25 <sup>th</sup> - September 29 <sup>th</sup>	Iraq- on-site		X	
Fieldwork – data collection	Evaluation firm	30 <sup>th</sup> of September- to 13 <sup>th</sup> October	Iraq – on site.		X	X
Submission of the first draft evaluation report together with the Management Response Matrix and a two-pager evaluation brief	Evaluation firm	First complete draft of the report to be shared on October 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Remote			X
Initial review of the first draft by IOM MEAL	IOM MEAL	October 23 <sup>rd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	Remote			x
Reflection of MEAL's initial feedback if needed	Evaluation firm	October 5 <sup>th</sup>	Remote			X

Activity	Responsible	Estimated Timeframes	Data Analysis	Aug 2025	Sep 2025	Oct 2025
IOM program team, and RO MEAL review.	IOM	October 6 <sup>th</sup> to October 15 <sup>th</sup>				x
Meeting to present the main evaluation findings to IOM	Evaluation firm	October 14 <sup>th</sup>	Remote			x
Submission of the final evaluation report with the MRM and a two-pager evaluation brief	Evaluation firm	Final report package shared with IOM on <b>October 23<sup>rd</sup> COB Iraq time</b>	Remote			x

## 7. Terms of Payment

The payment terms shall be issued per the terms and conditions of the Purchase Order (PO) based on the disbursement schedule below;

- Satisfactory inception report submission inclusive of data collection tools and plans – 30%
- Submission of first draft of the evaluation report package (evaluation brief, MRM tool) together with raw data – 30%
- Satisfactory final report with relevant annexes – 40%

The final payment shall be issued not less than 30 days upon (1) the completion of the work, (2) receipt of the final original invoice and (3) receipt of the final evaluation report and summary of the evaluation brief following the incorporation of feedback from the IOM ERG and RO.

## 8. REQUIREMENTS

An international consultancy firm with valid registrations, and it is expected to have legal registration paperwork in Iraq, and formal access to the locations of the programme implementation. Applicants should submit the following documents separately and sealed.

Expression of interest: a cover letter with a maximum of one page introducing the consulting firm with an expression of interest to carry out the work as described in this ToR.

**Financial Proposal:** The financial proposal should include details of the evaluation cost breakdown per evaluation activities and should be submitted sealed. The financial proposal will be evaluated out of 30% and opened on successful technical evaluation result above 50%.

**Technical proposal:** This should include, but not limited to, understanding of the ToR with critical reflection on the consultancy assignment, methods (with extremely strong emphasis, should be detailed with clear presentation), tentative work plan, proposed team qualification and experience, others. The technical proposal will be evaluated out of 70%. Note that once the consultancy firm or consultant has been selected to undertake the study, IOM Iraq will not accept changes on the team composition.

The selected firm/ consultant is expected to possess the following minimum qualifications as follows:

## 9. Selection Criteria

*Table 03: Rating Criteria*

No	Rating Criteria	Result
<b>Understanding of the TOR (10 point)</b>		
1.1	It is clear from the application that the TOR and tasks are clearly understood by the applicant	Fail/ Pass
2.1	Has done at least three similar consulting work (programme and project evaluations) with UN agencies or INGOs	Fail/ Pass
2.2	Has expertise /excellence/ on Economic Growth & Market Systems Development thematic areas-such as SMEs, Livelihoods, and related areas.	Fail/ Pass
3.1	Lead Evaluator/Team leader's or consultancy firm's experience in similar consultancy work/programme evaluation	Fail/ Pass
3.2	CVs of Evaluation team submitted, and team has necessary skills, competencies and experience to conduct the evaluation	Fail/ Pass
5.1	Proposed methods to conduct the programme evaluation	Fail/ Pass
5.2	Proposed data collection methods and tools	Fail/ Pass
6.1	Presents clear logical work plan that shows how proposed activities of the consultancy will meet the consultancy objectives	Fail/ Pass

## 10. How to Apply

The interested firm/ consultant is expected to submit a technical proposal with a detailed evaluation methodology, indicative work plan, and the overall approach to the evaluation and an all-inclusive budget proposal no later than **July 31<sup>st</sup> 2025**. The submission of proposals (technical and financial) and/or related questions is expected to be directed via procurement email to: [iraqtenders@iom.int](mailto:iraqtenders@iom.int)

The submission is expected to include the following:

- Company/ Consultant profile including a history of similar projects;
- A cover letter;
- Financial proposal
- Technical
- CV and biographies of independent consultant/consulting firm and key assessment team members;
- References for each evaluation team member or the firm;
- An example of a recent evaluation report.

**Important Note:** When evaluating the competing applicants, IOM will consider the written qualifications/capability, financial offer, the information provided by the applicants, and any other information obtained by IOM through its research.

IOM reserves the right to change the calendar of events or revise any parts of the requirements of the evaluation at any time.