

Request for Expressions of Interest (EOI)

Business Development and Training Services' Providers

Issued on February 12, 2018

USAID Lebanon Enterprise Development (LED) Project

**Deadline for Response: March 2, 2018
4:00p.m., Lebanon Time**

SECTION I. BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, AND SCOPE OF WORK

A. Background

Chemonics International Inc. is the prime contractor for the Lebanon Enterprise Development Project (hereafter referred to as *LED*), which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under Contract No. AID-268-C-17-00001.

LED is a five-year project that seeks to increase employment opportunities for Lebanese citizens. The purpose of this announcement is to solicit expressions of interest (EOIs) from Lebanese consulting firms who are interested in working with LED and in being included in LED's short-list of pre-identified business development services and training providers.

During LED's lifespan, selected providers will be hired to assist LED "client enterprises" to solve business problems that are constraining revenue and employment growth.

A1. Challenges Facing Lebanon's SMEs

Lebanon is a country in transition, in a region with extremely complex geopolitical challenges. The need for social and economic stability is high.

Adding to this challenge is Lebanon's high unemployment and under-employment, which puts added stress on the country's prospects for stability and economic growth. Therefore, employment creation activities such as LED are important and timely. According to a recent report, the unemployment rate among Lebanese citizens rose from 11% in 2011 to 33% in 2016, representing 360,000 more unemployed people during the period. The conflict in Syria and the resulting flow of refugees into Lebanon largely explains this increase, as thousands of Lebanese workers have been substituted by Syrian workers in practically all economic activities.

A2. Opportunities for LED

To contribute to Lebanon's peace and stability, Lebanese citizens need wage-based employment, especially the youth, university graduates, and women who experience chronic unemployment. Accordingly, LED's purpose is to increase employment opportunities for Lebanese citizens. Supporting this, LED has three objectives:

1. Create jobs by increasing the competitiveness and enhancing growth of Lebanese client firms
2. Improve Lebanon's business enabling environment
3. Communicate results and share project knowledge with the public and private sectors

To achieve this, LED will apply a problem-solving buyer-led approach (BLA) to help Lebanese enterprises increase their sales and hire more Lebanese citizens. LED will assist enterprises, chosen using selection criteria, to identify specific buyer/s and understand their requirements; to diagnose the key

enterprise-level constraints that stand in the way of concluding sales contracts with these buyer/s; and to find solutions to these problems using tailored firm-specific technical assistance solutions that will be delivered principally by Lebanese business service providers and consultants, or as needed, by international consultants. LED will prioritize support for businesses that produce goods and services for a known buyer or market. LED's work will be transactional—focused on making deals happen, because sales growth leads to jobs. Over time, LED will also prioritize selected business enabling environment problems and work with the private sector to analyze these issues and propose solutions for them.

At the firm-level, actors across multiple sectors face a variety of constraints and therefore a one-size-fits-all approach for technical assistance will not work. To obtain and provide targeted, specialized assistance, LED will work with training and business development service providers throughout the country. These businesses and organizations may be subcontracted to develop and deliver specialized technical assistance and training to firms to support them in developing their business offerings, and/or to address constraints preventing those firms from achieving growth.

It is anticipated that as a result of LED support, Lebanese enterprises will have improved their ability to create new job opportunities in multiple growth sectors.

A3. Objective of the EOI

This request for EOI is intended to help LED identify Lebanese business service providers who are interested in being included in a pool of pre-identified subcontractors who may be hired to engage in various consulting, training, and capacity-building activities for LED in the future. Being 'pre-identified' does not guarantee any provider LED business; rather it means that interested providers may become part of a short-list of firms who may be contacted and considered for future specific scopes of work (terms of reference) within the general technical parameters of the LED program.

Although providers for each scope of work will be contracted individually, this request for EOI will help LED to be aware of offeror skills and specializations, and it may enable LED to narrow the pool of competition to only pre-identified, eligible providers. It therefore allows LED to quickly issue RFPs to the relevant pre-identified firms to carry out necessary tasks for the project.

B. Scope of Work

Service providers will support LED in implementing technical assistance plans and deliver specialized technical assistance and training in one or more of the following *illustrative areas*.

- Identifying new buyers/markets
- Improving sales and marketing
- Improving transport, logistics
- Improving product packaging
- Upgrading production techniques
- Enhancing quality control systems
- Improving/upgrading product design
- Identifying/organizing new suppliers
- Upgrading technological innovation
- Accessing credit/finance
- Improving management practices
- Improving human resource
- Improving knowledge management
- Corporate Governance

Offerors are not restricted to specific sectors; however, LED anticipates that there is potential for growth and job creation in medium to large firms at the premium end of the market and to develop Lebanon's potential in export markets. Some promising industries and sectors may include, *but are not limited to*:

Tourism and Hospitality: Medical and wellness tourism, Ecotourism, High-end tourism, Business and event tourism, Traditional Lebanese and high end international cuisines.

Fashion and Accessories: Haute couture, Ready-to-wear, Lines for men, women junior, and children, Fashion accessories, Shoes and bags, Lingerie, Fashion shows and modelling, e-trade, Fashion publications, Fashion photography

ICT/Media: Motion picture, video and television program production, sound recording and music publishing activities, Programming and broadcasting activities. Digital Publishing (books newspapers, periodicals, brochures), and Software publishing.

Agro Industry: Food processing (packaging, bottling), diversification of the offer of new raw products (such as kiwis, chestnut, organic crops and products), Wine, Pre-prepared meals.

Other sectors of interest may also include: Construction and real estate; banking and financial services; education; transport and logistics; healthcare; consultancy / professional services; energy and water; green industries and waste recycling; or other sectors.

Offerors are requested to submit information relating to their technical areas of expertise depending on their level of competence, demonstrated experience and unique capabilities. Offerors need not express interest in providing services for all areas. As such, Offerors should clearly indicate which of the above areas, or others, they wish to be considered for.

C. Eligibility Criteria

Interested organizations shall have the legal capacity and financial resources to enter a subcontract and shall be a registered organization in Lebanon (not an individual). Offerors shall have a satisfactory performance record and record of integrity and business ethics.

Eligible organizations:

- Local for-profit consulting firms.
- Local non-profits or NGOs that are qualified to provide services and have the capacity to structure their accounting and finance for billable work to the project.

Ineligible organizations:

- Government entities,
- Organizations that appear on the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement and Non-Procurement Programs. The list can be found at <http://epls.gov>.

SECTION II. INSTRUCTIONS TO OFFERORS.

A. General Instructions to Offerors

EOIs are due at 4:00 p.m. March 2, 2018. They shall be delivered to the following point of contact:

Roger Karam, Grants and Procurement Manager
Lebanon Enterprise Development Project
LEDprocurement@lebanon-edp.com

The offeror shall submit their EOIs in electronic copy. All files constituting the submission should be submitted in software compatible with MS Word and MS Excel. EOIs shall be marked as: "Request for EOI for Business Development and Training Services Providers LED".

B. Instructions for the Preparation of the EOI

I. Statement of capabilities. Offeror shall provide a concise summary of their capabilities addressing the following elements:

- Demonstrated ability to provide business development services, consulting and training in the above listed areas (see Section I.B), or any other areas of relevance.
- Prior experience working with medium and large-sized businesses
- Demonstrated practical experience in multiple industries/sectors, particularly in the areas for which the consultants are proposed.

II. Past Performance. The past performance references required by this section shall be included as an annex or attachment. All information required regarding past performance shall be provided by each offeror in the table included in Annex 1 below, Instructions for Past Performance Information.

III. Personnel. Offerors shall include the following elements pertaining to personnel:

- List of proposed consultants, showing their area of expertise (use the attached chart in Annex 2)
- CVs (**preferred and not included in page limit**) of the proposed consultants staff and the authorized representative submitting the application. The CVs submitted shall clearly spell out the qualifications and competence of the proposed staff in terms of: General qualifications (both academic and general work experience), specific skills possessed by the proposed personnel that are relevant to this scope of work (see Section I.B); relevant work experience (both long-term employment and short-term consultancies).

IV. Administrative. Offerors shall also include the following:

- Details about the Offeror—its address, contact details, authorized signatory/s, and owner/s.
- A copy of a valid certificate of registration.
- A copy of the VAT registration certificate, if applicable.

C. List of Documents, Exhibits and Other Attachments

Annex 1: Instructions for Past Performance Information.

Annex 2: Template for proposed personnel by expertise

ANNEX 1: INSTRUCTIONS FOR PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Offeror should provide a summary of its qualifications and reference attachments, which shall include names and descriptions of contracts which are of similar scope, magnitude and complexity to the requirements in this solicitation. Please provide information on activities for the previous 5 (five) years.

This section should include a description of present and on-going programs which have a direct relationship to the activities presented in the applicant's EOI. Copies of relevant materials should be included as an attachment.

The Offeror shall provide the following information regarding its past performance using the following Past Performance Record (PPR) table.

- a. Contract Name, type and Sector;
- b. Name of point(s) of contact (not to exceed 3) and email address(es) as well as telephone/fax numbers for: a) client; and b) Government or commercial entity for which the contract was performed, if applicable;
- c. Value of the contract in Lebanese Lira;
- d. Period of Performance;
- e. Detailed description of the work performed;
- f. Relevance of the work performed to the proposed scope of work in section I.B;
- g. Clear statements describing whether the activity was completed on time, with a quality product conforming to the contract, without any degradation in performance or customer satisfaction.
- h. The number, type, frequency, duration and impact of any quality, delivery or cost problems in performing the activity, the corrective action taken, if any, and the effectiveness of the corrective action.

Past Performance Information Form – To be completed for each program described.

A. Contract Name, Type and Sector:	B. Contact information for client and/or institution for which services were performed
C. Total value in Lebanese Lira	D. Period of Performance
E. Detailed description of work performed	
F. Relevancy of the contract to work to be performed in SOW	
G. Clear statements describing time for completion, quality product if applicable	
H. Number, type, frequency, duration, and impact of any quality, delivery, or cost problems in performing the activity. The corrective action taken, if any, and the effectiveness of this action.	

LED will use this information to contact technical representatives on prior contracts to obtain information on performance. LED shall consider the information provided, as well as information obtained from other sources, when evaluating the offerors past performance and shall determine the relevance of similar past performance information.

ANNEX 2. TEMPLATE FOR PROPOSED PERSONNEL BY EXPERTISE

Consultant Name: _____

[illegible]