

Tender Description

Brief Summary of Organization:

Mercy Corps is a leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible. In disasters and hardships in more than 40 countries around the world, we partner to put bold solutions into action—helping people triumph over adversity and build stronger communities from within now and for the future.

The Iqlaa Program:

The USAID Informal Livelihoods Advancement Activity (Iqlaa) is a five-year USAID-funded program to support Jordan's HBBs and MSEs to grow, transform, and become resilient to future shocks. The Iqlaa approach will explore new business ways and improve access to finance, markets, and services. The program focuses on four sectors: agriculture, hospitality and tourism, manufacturing, and services, with special attention to technology development and implementation. Iqlaa infuses a gender, youth and social inclusion lens throughout all its interventions.

Through research and adaptive, collaborative learning, Iqlaa will identify opportunities, incentives, and market constraints that facilitate or restrict formalization and growth. Based on the findings, Iqlaa will implement best practices in enterprise strengthening, inclusive job creation, and financial sector development within a market systems development (MSD) framework, leveraging innovative behavioral change methodologies to facilitate long-term, sustainable changes in the MSEs ecosystem in Jordan.

Implementing Organizations: Mercy Corps (Lead Implementer), Andersen for Legal and Tax Consultancy (Andersen), Dalberg Design (Dalberg), Expectation State, Middle East Investment Initiative (MEII), Migrate-Jordan (Migrate), Q-Perspective, and American Chamber of Commerce in Jordan (AmCham).

Iqlaa Services:

- Conditional Grants: Iqlaa will extend grants to market actors for formalization, start-up funding, business growth, innovation and scale, and technology integration. Grant schemes are updated annually.
- Increased business linkages and access to markets for MSEs through aggregators and lead firms.
- Supporting MSEs through incubators and accelerators.
- E-commerce support to build e-commerce knowledge and skills and establish online stores.
- Business mentorship for MSEs through Mercy Corps' MicroMentor.
- Business and financial management capacity-building programs and software adoption services.

Tender Description:

Iqlaa is committed to empowering and assisting MSEs and HBBs by offering comprehensive support to help them expand their operations, revenues, and market reach through establishing an e-commerce presence. This support will encompass a blend of education, training, and technical assistance, ensuring that the services offered align with the business's objectives (market and revenue expansion through e-commerce) and are beneficial rather than burdensome to their model.

Therefore, Iqlaa is seeking to hire a national firms or international/Global firms within geo code 937 with preference for firms which has a partnership with national or regional firm. The selected firm will support HBBs and MSEs in improving their well-being and facilitating online sale of goods and services. The aim is to increase market reach and sales growth through e-commerce by providing HBBs and MSEs with access to an effective online platform. This intervention is intended to scale up beneficiary businesses, increase branding acceptance, and ensure online success, in addition to increasing the accessibility of these MSEs to new markets, and enabling them to succeed in online sales. Iqlaa's approach to e-commerce intervention is comprehensive, extending

beyond the technical development or provision of digital platforms, it's focusing on building a community of businesses that are equipped, trained and familiar with the requirements to thrive in the digital era, leveraging business skills, integrated with technology to enhance their operational efficiency, market reach, and customer engagement.

The firm will coordinate with the Iqlaa team to develop the supported intervention in terms of selection criteria, needed customized services (training and/or education) for selected HBBs and MSEs Iqlaa serves the following sectors: agriculture, manufacturing, services, and tourism. The firm will develop relevant criteria, and a detailed plan and methodology for reaching different MSEs in different sectors, including how and on what basis.

The firm will include a list of support, training and education services tailored for HBBs and MSEs, to support the successful and sustainable use of their e-commerce presence/websites, enabling them to successfully market and sell online. This includes online marketing, and the ability to offer and deliver their goods or services to buyers (fulfilment). Services should include the development of technical expertise on online store performance management and growth, the onboarding and creation of their accounts, and the existence of a unique platform for each of them. Furthermore, the firm should consider introducing and training/educating business owners on suitable payment and delivery methods as well as assisting them in managing their finances.

Terms of Reference (ToR)

The firm shall propose a clear and detailed methodology to deliver the objectives and to achieve the purpose indicated in the Purpose and Description section above as well as indicate how to measure the outcomes of the proposed RFP. The proposed methodology must be comprehensive, and any other creative and progressive methods of learning can be proposed and considered by the firm.

The firm will develop and deliver a list of comprehensive & professional services targeting HBBs and MSEs, including:

1. Initial research and needs assessment, as well as a thorough analysis, are required to identify the unique needs, knowledge and skills of business owners and their ventures, which are critical for effectively employing, customizing and leveraging e-commerce solutions, to enhance their sales (particularly for online stores). This stage is extremely important as the necessary business and managerial skill sets to effectively and sustainably manage e-commerce activities need to be identified. This knowledge will be used to either select eligible HBBs and MSEs to receive e-shops/e-commerce solutions by the successful bidder and to develop and deliver appropriate training and skill development activities to HBBs and MSEs who do not possess the necessary skills.
2. Platform Development: focuses on creating or modifying user-friendly e-commerce platforms with an efficient content management system (CMS) and Administrative online-store management tailored to HBBs and MSEs. Key features include:
 - Customizable Stores: adaptable product management and order processing features designed for mobile use to improve accessibility.
 - Payment Gateway Integration: secure and dependable payment systems that simplify customer transactions and improve the shopping experience.
 - Inventory Management: reliable systems for accurately tracking stock levels and control and managing product availability.
 - Delivery Gateway Integration: Efficient shipping processes that ensure on-time deliveries and increase customer satisfaction.

- Marketing and promotion tools include social media, discount codes, and loyalty programs for engaging customers and increasing sales.
- Web accessibility principles will be looked upon favorably.¹
- 3. Content Creation and Branding: Creating professional, appealing written and visual (i.e. photographs, video) content, as well as custom themes, logos, and color schemes, to strengthen business branding and reach a larger audience for e-commerce hubs all depend on existed branding or relevant for each business
- 4. Training and Capacity Building and Coaching: Comprehensive skill development programs on e-commerce strategies and e-commerce use to provide business owners with the skills required to manage and grow their businesses, expand their market reach, increase revenue, and coaching until businesses being independently perform. Including all relevant capacity building to succeed the E-shop such as digital marketing, social media management and marketing.
- 5. Digital platform management entails ensuring platforms are efficient, secure, and aligned with business objectives, including:
 - Cybersecurity and Compliance: Implementing security measures and following data protection laws to protect user data.
 - Analytics and Market Research: Using tools to analyze user behavior and market trends and make strategic adjustments.
 - SEO and Content Strategy: Developing and implementing search-engine-optimized (SEO) content strategies to increase website visibility and reach.
 - Monetization Strategies: Investigate various revenue streams such as advertisements, subscriptions, and direct sales.
 - Design and User Experience: Using best design practices to make the platform user-friendly and visually appealing.
 - User engagement includes regular feedback, usability testing, social media marketing, and email campaigns.
 - Financial Analysis: Monitoring and analyzing financial performance in order to increase profitability.
- 6. Technical support and customization: Providing ongoing support and coaching and developing appropriate e-commerce solutions to meet the unique needs of each business. Key areas include:
 - Scalability and Upgrades: Ensuring that platforms can expand and seamlessly integrate new features.
 - Onboarding and Account Management: Ensuring a smooth transition to the platform and providing ongoing account support.
 - Unique Platform Development: Developing customized platforms that align with specific business objectives.
- 7. Security measures include implementing stringent security protocols and compliance standards to safeguard sensitive customer data and transactions.

¹ <https://www.w3.org/WAI/fundamentals/accessibility-principles/>

8. Technical expertise in online store performance management and growth, including:
 - a. Scalability and Upgrades: Ensure the online store can handle increased traffic and transactions as the business grows and implement regular upgrades to incorporate new features and technologies to stay competitive.
 - b. Onboarding and Account Creation: Streamlining the onboarding process and account creation for businesses, ensuring a smooth transition onto the e-commerce platform, and providing ongoing support to maintain their accounts effectively.
 - c. Unique Platform Development: Customizing e-commerce platforms to meet the specific needs and preferences of each MSE, ensuring a tailored solution that aligns with their business goals and objectives.
 - d. Technical and Educational Support: Offer ongoing technical assistance and educational resources to HBBs and MSEs, including platform usage guidance, best practices for online selling, and troubleshooting assistance to help them optimize their online presence and achieve their business objectives.
 - e. Keeping abreast of innovations, trends and changes related to e-commerce and the associated components to be able to effectively remain engaged in e-commerce activities.

Ensure to apply accessible formats and reasonable accommodations as per identified needs to better include women, youth, PLWDs, and refugees

Main Activities

The applicant is responsible for ensuring the successful submission of the below activities:

Outreach, Assessment & Selection of HBBs and MSEs:

1. Develop a rational needs assessment of the targeted HBBs and MSEs that need the services provided to identify the ideal targeted HBBs and MSEs profile as Market research and segmentation.
2. Develop detailed selection criteria for selecting 400 HBBs and MSEs based on Iqlaa sectors, available and relevant skills and knowledge, (marketing and business growth) needs, location, and target market for the selected businesses. The criteria need to be approved by the Iqlaa team.
3. Develop customized e-commerce solutions and service packages to address the actual needs and preferences of MSEs and HBBs.
4. Develop and implement a comprehensive outreach plan in close coordination with the outreach team to reach MSEs and HBBs effectively through different online and offline channels, including the Iqlaa database, based on the approved criteria.
5. In close coordination with the Iqlaa team, contact various stakeholders (government institutes, non-governmental organizations, CBOs, private sector entities, etc.) to assist in reaching the most vulnerable MSEs, including those owned by women, youth, and persons with disabilities if needed.
6. Provide the final approved list of 400 HBBs and MSEs who pass the evaluation process and will participate in the program, and coordinate with the Iqlaa team to conduct segmentation visits to them.
7. Create a detailed work plan for the entire program, including but not limited to all stages, based on the scope of work for this application. Ensure accessibility and inclusion are taken into consideration for women, youth, and persons living with disabilities to be able to participate.

HBBs & MSEs behavioral Transition, Capacity building and Training:

1. Deliver appropriate and effective capacity-building and skill development training programs for selected HBBs and MSEs to enable them to effectively use e-commerce solutions for the growth of their businesses by developing materials and/or exercises that identify and develop the required skills needed as well as emphasize the behavioral competencies of a successful entrepreneur and/or business owner and to make sure to have a successful and proper transition with their customers who are not familiar with the new methodology of buying services/products rather than existed ones . This material must be branded based on Mercy Corps and USAID Iqlaa branding guidelines, emphasizing the behaviors women, youth, and persons with disabilities must exhibit given the unique barriers they face.
2. Develop and deliver training material in both languages (English and Arabic) with manuals and guidelines for e-commerce in both technical and behavioral competencies that take a new approach to equip HBBs and MSEs with the intention of establishing and growing their enterprises through the online marketplace. This material must be branded based on Mercy Corps and USAID Iqlaa branding guidelines while ensuring that training is provided in a way that ensures accessibility and inclusion of women, youth, and persons with disabilities
3. Share the relevance, rationale, and references that the firm used to create the materials.

Development and Deployment of e-commerce Hubs:

1. Needs assessment with selected HBBs and MSEs as focused consultation sessions to understand their specific needs and tailor support accordingly.
2. E-commerce Website Development and Deployment: the development and deployment of customized e-commerce websites tailored to the needs of MSEs and HBBs for a period of at least two years. This includes:
 - Designing and building e-commerce websites with user-friendly interfaces.
 - Customizing website features and functionalities to meet the specific requirements of each business.
 - Assisting in the creation and optimization of product listings, descriptions, and images.
 - Implementing content management systems (CMS) for easy website maintenance and updates.
 - Integrating payment gateways and secure checkout processes to facilitate online transactions.
 - Implementing inventory management systems for efficient order processing and fulfillment.
 - Integrating with delivery and logistics service providers to enable beneficiaries to deliver products to their online customers.
3. Monitor e-shop and e-commerce solution performance and develop feedback and support systems, maintain communication with selected MSEs and HBBs throughout the project timeline, solicit feedback regularly, and provide ongoing support and assistance to address any concerns or issues that might arise.

Technical Support of launched e-commerce hubs for HBBs and MSEs

1. Assistance in developing a post-program sustainability plan for MSEs and business owners, potentially linking it with existing entities already providing similar services by defining what areas require further capacity building by these MSEs to arrive at a defined growth target. These plans can be co-developed with each of the MSEs as part of their self-awareness of their pathway to growth and independence, etc.
2. Plan for monitoring and evaluating progress during and after implementation, in collaboration with the Iqlaa M&E team.
3. Provide a rationale for determining the percentage of successful outcomes related to e-commerce solutions for selected MSEs and HBBs that have their own online platforms. This should be based on key metrics such as the number of clicks, searches, purchases, and other relevant indicators
4. Continually track, identify and document areas within the e-commerce domain which need to be addressed beyond the scope of this ToR to facilitate successful e-commerce activity.
5. Provide a final technical report for the entire program.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

The applicant must propose a MEL plan to measure and evaluate project progress and the achievement of the different project's phases. The MEL plan includes outcome and output indicators with their targets. The Iqlaa Program Quality and Learning team will work with each grantee to further detail and finalize a monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan based on these and other indicators to ensure the accuracy of the reports submitted and to ensure measure the grants outcomes on the targeted MSEs in the targeted areas. The indicators might include, but are not limited to:

1. Number of firms supported by the activity
2. Percentage of MSEs with improved resilience capacities through USG assistance
3. Number of firms receiving USG assistance reporting increased exports, sales, and/or profitability. (Mission # 1.2.a)
4. Number of MSEs who report reaching new or expanded markets
5. Number of private sector firms that have improved management practices or technologies as a result of USG assistance. (F # EG.5.2.2, Mission # 1.2.3.b)
6. Number of firms receiving USG-funded technical assistance for improving business performance
7. Number of business linkages created between MSEs and market system actors as a result of USG assistance
8. Number of days of USG-funded training provided to support MSE's financial development.
9. Number of targeted women-owned MSMEs with more revenue (Mission # 1.3.a)

The PQL team will grant access to a data collection platform to the applicant. The applicant should utilize the platform and the unified data collection tools developed by the Iqlaa team. The applicant will be responsible for submitting participants' related data into the tools, including but not limited to the MSE registration tool, and service provision survey along with the requested verifications. It is mandatory for the applicant to adhere to Mercy Corps' Information Management protocols and policies.

In addition to the above, the following are key PQL requirements:

- The selected MSEs should be registered on Iqlaa database and assessed using the segmentation toolkit.
- Through the intervention, the consultant should be coordinating with Iqlaa's MEL focal point
- Throughout the activities implemented, the consultant should use Iqlaa's data collection platform to log the participants who received the services.

The service provider is responsible to share all the evidence and means of verifications per participants and per activity as requested and required from the PQL unit and the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) focal point in Iqlaa on ongoing bases as will be agreed with the MEL focal point.

The service provider should assign a MEL focal point responsible for data collection and reporting. The applicant should identify and allocate proficient MEL personnel as a focal point to work closely with the Iqlaa PQL team on finalizing the MEL plan, ensure adherence to the approved MEL activities, and be responsible for leading and undertaking the routine monitoring activities in line with Iqlaa MEL system and tools.

The consultant's learning requirement focuses on utilizing data and insights from various sources to inform decision-making. This includes collaborating with Mercy Corps and beneficiaries to jointly reflect on intervention implementation, capturing lessons learned, and disseminating them. The applicant should place a strong

emphasis on continuous learning and adaptation, using feedback from performance monitoring and learning from results obtained to make informed decisions.

The applicant will assist Iqlaa's PQL team in collecting data to support evidence-based learning. This will involve conducting interviews with the applicant's technical team members and actively participating in pause and reflect sessions, as well as learning activities such as community of practice and roundtable discussions. Additionally, the applicant will help the PQL team organize focus-group discussions, interviews, and pause and reflect activities with the targeted MSEs.

After the pause and reflect sessions, the applicant will collaborate with Mercy Corps to develop action plans for implementing adaptations that will improve the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, outcomes, and sustainability of the interventions. The applicant will be responsible for implementing and applying the agreed adaptations within the specified timeframe outlined in the action plans.

Linkages with Iqlaa activities

The firms must build and link their scope to Iqlaa current activities

- As part of its efforts to provide improved mentorship support for micro and small enterprises (MSEs), USAID-funded Iqlaa launched its own MicroMentor landing page (www.micromentor.org/usaaid-iqlaa) in English and Arabic, which will be connecting MSE owners in Jordan to qualified mentors locally and globally.
- As a global leader in online business mentoring with a proven impact on business survival and job creation, Mercy Corps' MicroMentor expanded to Jordan in 2020 and has become the largest support platform for Jordanian entrepreneurs. Mentored operational businesses were 13% more likely to survive the year and new businesses were 19% more likely to survive their first year. Through its own developed MicroMentor landing page, Iqlaa can now scale up the platform and aims to form 2,500 new mentorship connections. The platform will help improve business linkages, networks, and access to new markets. It is at the heart of Iqlaa's objectives and its vision to achieve impact sustainability through market actors.
- Migrate is part of the Iqlaa consortium partners, and is a Jordanian-based, business knowledge and networking company that provides innovative business support to its clients in the MENA region and other international markets.

Under Iqlaa, Migrate will continue to provide a wide range of services that are critical to the long-term growth of MSMEs and facilitate HBB and MSE linkages to medium and large business supply chains through the existing Business Hubs network (North of Jordan) which is being expanded in the Central and Southern governorates and East Amman). These Business Hubs provide bundled Business Development Service (BDS) support to MSEs, including financial services, Workspace, Procurement, Registration/Formalization support, Networking, and finally training and best practices to foster an inclusive hiring culture and safe, dignified work environments.

Required Deliverables

1. Inception Report: This will include

- Needs assessment to assess the general key conditions for e-commerce, guiding the feasibility, trends, and opportunities for the project.
- Timetable for the entire program, including all stages, geographic locations exercises, workshops, training, website development, and other related activities that will take place.
- All (primary) data collection tools to be used.
- Selection criteria per the defined scope above under the main activities section.

- The monitoring and evaluating plan during and after implementation
 - Technical Team Setup: Establishment of a specialized technical team with defined roles and responsibilities.
 - Documentation of team members' qualifications and expertise.
 - A detailed annotated Table of Contents for the Final Reports to be submitted.
2. Outreach plan targeting the MSEs with a list of at least 400 final selected participants/business owners, including those owned by women, youth, and persons with disabilities, based on the selection criteria, who will participate in the program. At least 10% of the selected participants should include persons with disabilities, youth, and women.
3. Interim Report Inclusive of:
- Documentation and results of the implemented outreach plan.
 - The final approved list of MSEs and business owners who passed the evaluation process and will participate in the program.
 - Share any relevant research and references that the company used to create these materials.
 - MSEs needs and challenges that make them eligible to be part of the e-commerce program.
 - Comprehensive plan for training material to be delivered to the selected beneficiaries.
4. Training:
- Training material for the management and administration of e-commerce and online marketing with a manual and guidelines
 - Deliver necessary training or coaching to provide participating business owners with the skills needed to compete in data-driven and digitally enhanced markets, as well as to boost their competitiveness.
- Training material must be delivered in English for review by Iqlaa and translated into Arabic for delivery of training to the MSEs.
5. Training report covering proof of implementation of the training for the selected participants (as minimum target for each firm) on the approved materials and inclusive at minimum of (i) a pre and post assessments of the participating MSEs, (ii) assessment of the training by the participating MSEs, (iii) attendance sheets for the MSEs (per the required disaggregation).
6. Launching at least the assigned online stores for each selected firm, including:
- Needs Assessment and Consultation: Documentation of consultation sessions with each MSE, including their requirements, goals, and target audience.
 - Assist a minimum target for each firm MSEs in developing and launching their websites (online stores) with the help of a specialized technical team. Including:
 - Domain Registration: Confirmation of registered domain names for each online store.
 - Hosting Setup: Documentation of hosting services selected for each online store.
 - Website Development: Completion of customized online stores with documented design specifications and functionalities.
 - Content Migration: Transfer of product information, images, and content from offline to online stores with documentation of the process.
 - SSL Certificate Installation: Documentation of SSL certificates installed for secure transactions.
 - Testing and Quality Assurance: Documentation of testing procedures and results ensuring the functionality and performance of each online store.
 - Support business owners and MSEs with inventory management, product pricing, marketing content and design, and social media:
 - Inventory Management: Guidelines and documentation on inventory organization and management.

- Product Pricing: Pricing strategies tailored to each MSE's market segment with documented rationale.
- Marketing Content and Design: Creation of marketing content and visuals with documented content plans and design concepts.
- Social Media Support: Development of social media marketing strategies with documented plans and account setup.

- Once the websites (online stores) are complete and operational, the firm will assist with the provision and development of payment and delivery solutions.

- Integration of secure payment gateways with documentation of implemented solutions.
- Setup of shipping and delivery solutions with documented partners or carrier integrations.

- Go-Live Process:
 - Coordination and documentation of the launch schedule for each online store.
 - Training materials and documentation provided to MSEs for managing their online stores post-launch.
 - Post-launch monitoring and documentation of website performance.
 - Ensuring that business owners or MSEs (created platform) receive its first online orders and payments.

- Tracking and Evaluation:
 - Documentation of post-launch website performance metrics, including traffic, conversion rates, and sales.
 - Feedback gathered from MSEs with documented improvements implemented based on feedback.

7. Submit plans:

- General Workplan for the whole project.
- Monitoring and evaluating progression plan during and after implementation of the project.
- Capacity Building and training plan
- Coaching plan
- Program sustainability. 8. Final Report based on the agreed-to template.

Timeframe

The assignment timeframe will begin upon signing the contract for a period distributed over 12 calendar months. Applicants shall adhere to this timeline while developing the work plan in the technical proposal. Contract time extension can be granted upon written email requests and with proper justification.

Ethical Considerations

MC is committed to ensuring that all individuals we encounter through our work, whether team members, community members, program participants, or others, are treated with respect and dignity. We are committed to the core principles regarding the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse laid out by the UN Secretary-General and IASC. We will not tolerate child abuse, sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment by or of our team members.

As part of MC's commitments to the Core Humanitarian Standards for Quality and Accountability and to provide services with respect and protection to human rights, MC applies multiple policies to prevent and mitigate improper incidents. These applied policies must be obligated by all MC stakeholders including the contractors.

The selected candidate shall sign and adhere to the MC's policies, such as safeguarding, antifraud, conflict of interest, and anti-corruption.

Ownership

MC requires that all efforts from contractors, including connections, Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) data, secondary resources, tools, presentations, and templates that were developed during any assignment shall remain the property of MC only and shall be treated in confidentiality and not to be shared with any third parties. That also applies to all documents shared from the MC side with the contractor such as global guidelines, proposals, and any other project documentation.

Qualifications

- The firm should have proven experience developing e-commerce solutions, including an online marketplace, conversion optimization, shopping and shipping online, payment gateways, and any other relevant solutions, particularly in Jordan.
- The firm should have an understanding of the needs, challenges, and constraints faced by Previous projects that focus on supporting micro & small enterprises (MSEs).
- The firm should demonstrate technical expertise in tailoring technology services and solutions with good knowledge of responsive design principles, to meet specific requirements and preferences of individual businesses, including branding, content creation, design, functionality with a mobile optimization
- The firm should demonstrate knowledge in digital marketing with proven experience in implementing SEO best practices, to help businesses attract and retain customers including social media marketing and content marketing.
- Previous similar projects with international organizations (especially USAID projects) are preferred.
- The firm should have the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively with clients, understand their needs, and communicate technical concepts in a clear and understandable manner
- Strong familiarity with the Jordanian economic development context is required.
- Experience in working in the governorate with vulnerable communities is preferred.
- In the case of selecting an international or global firm, it is preferable for the firm to be familiar with the Jordanian context within the e-commerce sector.
- Proficient English language skills are essential