**Programme: “**Economic and social participation of vulnerable displaced and local populations in the Caucasus” (EPIC)

**PN:** 2017.4061.2-004.00

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**Activity**: Design methodology for SME trainings (face to face and online) to expand the existing pool of potential beneficiaries

**Period:** 5August 2020 – 2 November 2020  
(up to 65 expert days for a team of national and international experts)

1. **Project background**

The programme on Economic and Social Participation of Vulnerable Displaced and Local Populations in the Caucasus (EPIC) was designed with the objective to improve socio-economic participation of vulnerable displaced and local population in the South Caucasus.The Armenian component under the EPIC programme was launched in October 2018 aiming at economic integration of vulnerable displaced persons from Syria and local population.

In Armenia, the programme objective is translated into three closely related fields of activity:

1. Strengthening capacities of public actors to promote economic participation of vulnerable population, both displaced and local
2. Increasing employability of target groups with a special focus on women and youth;
3. Enabling private sector actors to apply new measures to promote local economic development and business start-ups

The South Caucasus, since 1991 has witnessed a number of regional conflicts that resulted in proportionally huge displacements of population and large communities of displaced in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Different factors hamper the economic and social integration of displaced population in their host-communities, among them a lack of vocational qualifications and key competencies that match the demands of the local labour market and a lack of opportunities to participate in decisions about the local development in their host-communities.

Due to the war in Syria there was another significant movement to Armenia primarily of people with Armenian background. According to the Government of Armenia and UNHCR, the number of persons displaced from Syria currently present in Armenia is estimated to be around 15 000-17 000. While these figures are small in absolute numbers, they constitute a significant challenge for a small country such as Armenia. The government needed to expand its capacity to respond to the humanitarian challenges, elevate its process of naturalisation and prepare for the integration of thousands of new citizens into the labour market and larger society.

The RA government introduced a number of measures assisting persons displaced from Syria, offering them a variety of protection options, namely by way of (i) simplified acquisition of citizenship, (ii) accelerated asylum procedures or (iii) privileged granting of short, mid-term or long-term residence permits.

The quite heterogeneous and diverse in terms of professional background and skills group of Syrian Armenians (SAs) is welcomed with open arms by the RA government and society. This combination of i) SA enthusiasm, broad skills, experience especially in the Middle East and Mediterranean and service-orientation together with ii) Armenia’s declared interest and commitment for their integration supported by the international community offers excellent pre-conditions to tap into the many economic opportunities. This can possibly help Armenia’s economy to innovate and grow and open new markets regionally and internationally.

GIZ prioritizes gender mainstreaming in all its programmes and seeks for constant promotion of gender equality.

1. **Conditions of the assignment**
   1. **Relevance, objective, tasks and deliverables**
2. **Relevance**

The importance of entrepreneurial education has long been recognized and given special attention in many developed countries. Although, entrepreneurial education (EE) has long been out of the reach for many business / entrepreneurs in RA, the need to enhance it now is vital as never. SME Development strategy, designed by the Government of Armenia, holds four pillars one of which is the capacity building for entrepreneurship.

The Action Programme of the Government of RA for 2019-2023 indicates the importance of supporting the people with entrepreneurial potential to create businesses through building their capacity, boosting innovativeness, increasing access to finance and etc.

According to the report by Business Advocacy Network (BAN 2018) only 18% of SMEs in Armenia rated their ability to run their own business as excellent, while **55%** said their ability to do business was **poor** and **27%** rated it **very poor**. According to EBA (European Business Association) 82% rated their ability to run their own businesses as poor.

BAN 2018 report mentions that 89% of SMEs think that “classes, training, professional education, information accessibility” is an important issue, but only 44% claim to have access to these services. Ameria Management Advisory, in their study on SME in Armenia (2019) mentions that in spite of high level of proactivity and entrepreneurship spirit, local businesses lack entrepreneurship education, as a result, against 12.8% of newly established SMEs in 2017, about 12.6% of other SMEs died, which left us with almost no positive increment.

Research “SMEs in 2015 -2018 Current Issues and Prospects for Development” (July 2019) suggest that the existence of entrepreneurial capacity was generally assessed as unsatisfactory by new start-ups. At the same time there is a demand for business services and consulting, but SME’s lack financial resources for that.

According to Global Entrepreneurship Monitor: Armenian report 2019 one out of each five adults in Armenia are engaged in early-stage entrepreneurship which is the 7th highest indicator among 50 GEM countries, however Armenia’s entrepreneurship has one of the lowest productivities compared to other countries. While early-stage entrepreneurship is at high level in Armenia, level of established business is in average positions: Armenia is on 40th position among 50 countries with established business ratio and is 12th with perception of having skills and knowledge among population, which means that there is a need for entrepreneurship education and trainings in the country to support businesses to succeed in transformation from early-stage to sustainable business.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Entrepreneurial education is one of the main components that need to be strengthen in Armenia**, Armenian indicator of Entrepreneurial education is below GEM average (50th out of 54 countries for post-school education and 36th for school level). As per expert assessment in Armenia and other 2019 GEM countries, entrepreneurial education at primary and secondary stage and especially at post-school stage lags behind most of the countries. Particularly, the assessment of the statement “The vocational, professional and continuing education systems provide good and adequate preparation for starting up and growing new firms” is the second lowest among all 54 countries in GEM NES. The assessment of other statements on education in Armenia reveals issues with adequate instruction in market economic principles (competitive advantages, productivity, use of technology), as well as good and adequate preparation for starting up and especially growing new firms.

This means that further development of entrepreneurship conditions in Armenia should focus more on providing better conditions to sustain a venture into an established business: Armenia is behind GEM average by the following components of entrepreneurial activity**: (i) Entrepreneurial education,** (ii) R&D transfer and (iii) Government entrepreneurial programmes and (iv) Entrepreneurial finance. These areas need to be strengthened the most to foster entrepreneurship activity in the country.

1. **Objective**

The objective of this assignment is to design methodology for SME trainings (face to face and online) to expand the existing pool of potential beneficiaries. Flexibility of schedules and logistics, as well as targeted set-up and content shall increase the access and successful participation of participants from regions, women and other vulnerable groups.

1. **Tasks**
2. Design the competency framework expected to be developed as a result of training
3. Design of the training methodologies
4. Design of the training modules for f2f and online modules
5. Design of the certification module
   1. **Deliverables**

| **Deliverables** | **Timeline** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Designing a competency framework** |  |
| Holding a meeting with donors and main players in the field of entrepreneurship education to discuss the competency framework.  Building a competency framework and deliverables for the training. | *Draft: 12 August 2020*  *Final: 17 August 2020* |
| 1. **Design of the training methodologies** |  |
| Researching the existing approaches (locally and internationally) and design one in accordance to the competency framework. | *Draft: 25 August 2020*  *Final: 1 September 2020* |
| Designing the concept of the training – curriculum: duration, methodology, modules (face to face and online) |
| 1. **Design of the training modules for f2f and online modules** |  |
| Detailed design of each module with objectives (activities, exercises, reading and visual materials, assignments) based on the competency framework with specific objectives and assessment tools. | *Draft: 01 October 2020*  *Final: 15 October 2020* |
| Designing trainers’ manual, that in details describes how to approach/facilitate each module |
| 1. **Design of the certification module** |  |
| Design the assessment methodology – based on the competency framework and curriculum | *Draft: 5 October 2020*  *Final: 15 October 2020* |
| Developing the requirements for the online platform and certification module |
| Designing the final assessment/exam module (to be assessed upon the framework). |
| Designing the exam creation and assessment manual. |

* 1. **Conditions and payment terms**

Payment shall be made based on the type of remuneration, following the performance of services, submission of deliverables, progress reports and final report, acceptance of services performed and invoicing.

The offer shall include international expertise. In total, the offer shall allocate up to 65 days split between 1 international expert and a pool of national expert(s) with 10 days envisaged for an international expert who might work remotely (in case he/she does not reside currently in Armenia) and 55 expert days for national expert(s). The international expert offered by an applying company should meet the requirements specified in this TOR.

* 1. **Coordination and communication**
* The hired company reports to GIZ EPIC team leader
* The hired company will work closely with the international expert
* Continuous exchange with the RA Ministry of Economy to discuss the activities
* The international expert shall review and provide interim and final feedback to all the deliverables elaborated by the national expert(s)
* The working language will be both English and Armenian
* The experts will coordinate closely in all technical issues with the GIZ EPIC team members.
  1. **Qualification Requirements**

Local Company

* Proven expertise in the area of sustainable private sector development with special focus on provision of impactful technical assistance to SMEs and business development services providers (5 years min)
* Profound proven hands-on experience in developing training methodology for SME development (at least 3 projects)
* Experience in online training development
* Experience in working with international, as well as local counterparts and beneficiaries
* Understanding the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
* Experience on gender mainstreaming is an asset.
* Proven knowledge of English and Armenian languages

International expert

* Proven experience of at least 5 years in training methodology design for business development
* Proven experience in online training methodology design for wide beneficiary groups
* Proven experience in provision of capacity building and coaching services
* Knowledge of best practices of SME development measures preferably in Germany or other equivalent EU countries
* Creative and innovate approaches for development of substantial and user-friendly manuals

1. Within the framework of the “Successful Start” program, 23 full day CEFE training course is conducted in face-to-face (F2F) format. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)