التعاون الألماني
DEUTSCHE ZUSAMMENARBEIT

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Implemented by
giz Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

In coordination with:

GIZ Syria, TVET and Employment Promotion Programme (STEP)

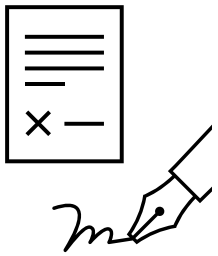
Funding Opportunities for Development Partnerships with the Private Sector in Syria

Information Session

19 November 2026

GIZ Syria

1976 Technical Cooperation Agreement remains in force



2008 Support for water infrastructure, culture and civil society

2011 Outbreak of the war

Suspension of cooperation with Syria



2013 GIZ begins implementing projects outside regime-controlled areas

Support for Syrian civil society in opposition-controlled areas, e.g. social cohesion, health and agriculture

8th Dec. 2024 Fall of the regime

2026 Reopening of the GIZ Country Office

New projects in vocational training, water and governance, in cooperation with Syrian partners

STEP Programme – General Overview

Multi-donor initiative: Jointly funded by BMZ, SDC (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation) and the European Union

Balance between short-term labour market integration measures and long-term support for reform processes

Area-based approach

Engagement of diaspora businesses

Social cohesion and peacebuilding as cross-cutting themes

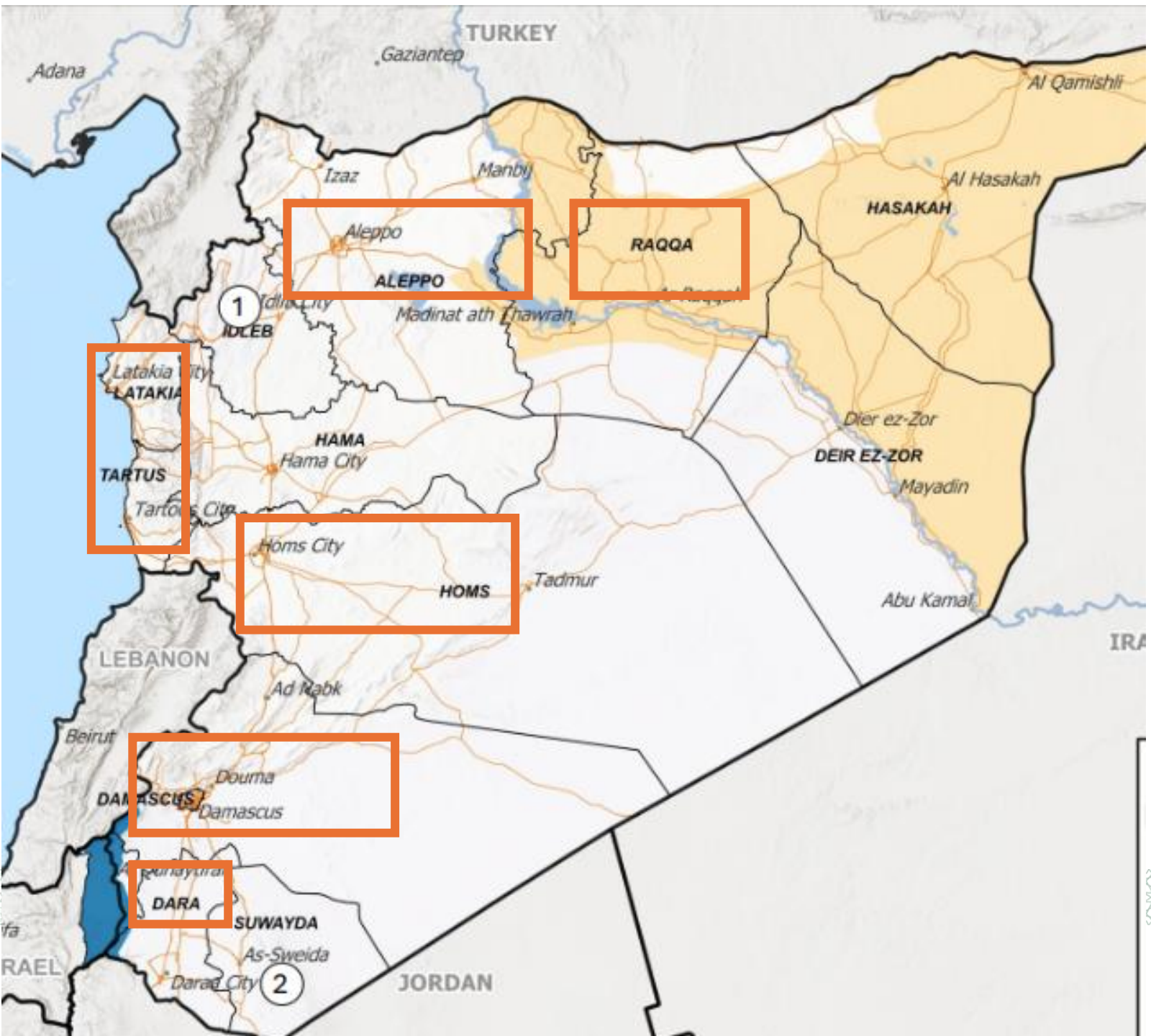
STEP Programme – General Overview

Overall programme objective:

- Improving employment prospects in Syria
- Close cooperation with the local private sector
- Long-term focus on dual vocational education and training
- Short-term focus on practice-oriented upskilling
- Company-based training tailored to specific skills needs
- Training of trainers and instructors
- Curriculum development
- Labour market integration measures

Local Partners:

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Higher Education
- Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
- Ministry of Industry
- Statistical Commission
- Chambers of Industry
- Individual companies



Criteria:

- Economic and employment potential
- Return of displaced persons
- Stabilisation and conflict prevention

What Is the Call for Expressions of Interest About?

- **Innovative approaches to employment promotion in cooperation with the private sector (European and Syrian companies)**
- Practice-oriented vocational training and upskilling across different sectors
- Internship programmes
- Improvements in job quality
- Inclusion of specific target groups
- Job-matching support for jobseekers and companies
- Mentoring approaches
- Studies, where relevant
- **→ Activities must generate benefits beyond the company's immediate commercial interests and core business objectives.**

- **What Is Not Funded?**
- Introduction of new production lines
- Improvement of product standards to increase efficiency and productivity
- Establishment of market linkages for export purposes
- Recruitment of new employees alone, without additional development benefits

THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

From Project Idea to Development Partnership

How can your company get involved in the call for proposals?

- A practical example
- Eligibility requirements
- Eligible costs
- Application and selection process

A Fictional Example: Ms Rana Haddad – Entrepreneur in Aleppo



Rana Haddad
Owner of a textile company in Aleppo

- A family business with around **45 employees** in Aleppo.
- Two existing production halls are currently **underutilised.**
- A shortage of skilled workers and **outdated production methods** limit productivity.
- Rana wants to introduce **modern production processes** and create **additional employment** opportunities.
- She also wants to use both halls for **vocational training** – beyond her company's own staffing needs.

How can this business idea become a development partnership with GIZ?

Is it eligible?

What Challenges Does Ms Rana Haddad Face?

Typical challenges for textile companies in Syria



Shortage of skilled workers
Lack of qualified staff, in particular for modern production processes. ✓

Outdated production technology
Need for modernisation of machinery, production processes and production management. ✓

High energy and operating costs
Unreliable electricity supply and expensive alternative energy sources. ✓

Limited access to finance
Low investment capacity and limited credit options.

Difficult sourcing of raw materials
Dependence on imported fabrics, yarns and spare parts.

Competitive and market pressure
Competition from imported goods and difficult access to export markets.

Limited training and employment opportunities
Insufficient structured training, in particular for women and vulnerable groups. ✓

✓ **Marked in green:** These challenges can be specifically addressed through a development partnerrship (iEWP) under STEP.

What Do We Support?

Training and Up-skilling
Vocational training, re-skilling and advanced training

Company-based Training
Internships, work-based learning and practical, skills-oriented training

Developing Skills and Competencies
Vocational and technical skills as well as training of trainers

Creating Employment
Additional jobs and recruitment and retention of skilled workers



Training and Employment in Syria

Innovation & Sustainability
Technology and knowledge transfer, digitalisation and environmentally friendly work processes

Strengthening Cooperation
Partnerships with vocational training providers for labour market–oriented offers

Inclusion & Participation
Improved access to training and employment for women, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups

Attractive and Inclusive Jobs
Improving working conditions and promoting fair, inclusive workplaces

Goal: Tangible benefits for companies and sustainable employment and development prospects for people in Syria.

What Is a Development Partnership with the Private Sector?

A **joint project partnership** between GIZ and a company that combines business benefits for the company with **measurable development impact** in Syria.

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- Financial support (up to 50 %)
- Technical advice and guidance
- Quality assurance and impact monitoring

Joint Project in Syria



Company

- Own contribution (at least 50%, in cash or in kind)
- Implementation of activities within the company
- Contribution of expertise, technology and resources

Mutual Benefits

For the Company

Greater competitiveness, skilled workers and new business opportunities.

For Development in Syria

Vocational training, more and better jobs, inclusive and sustainable growth.

Two Contract Models – a Shared Objective

Implementation Agreement / Contract

GIZ provides financial resources and the company implements the project.

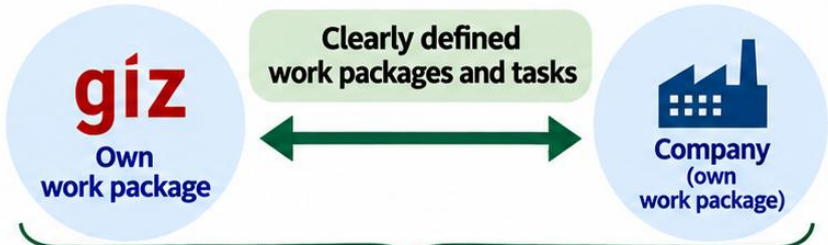


- GIZ finances part of the eligible costs.
- The company provides its own contribution (financial or in kind, e.g. its own services such as staff, equipment or premises).
- The company implements the agreed activities.

→ A contract with financial support

Cooperation Agreement / Contract

The partners each finance their respective work packages – **no funds are transferred** between them.



- Each party is responsible for clearly defined tasks (work packages).
- No transfer of funds between the partners.
- Joint objective: a sustainable impact in Syria.

→ A contract without financial support between the partners

Objective of both models: Economic development and sustainable employment in Syria.

Framework Conditions of the Call

GIZ Contribution
Up to **50%** of the eligible project costs

Minimum GIZ Contribution
EUR 40,000
(Minimum total project volume: EUR 80,000)

Maximum Project Volume
(depending on the contract model)

- **Implementation Agreement / Contract:** max. EUR 400,000 total (GIZ contribution: max. EUR 200,000)
- **Cooperation Agreement / Contract:** higher total volume and GIZ contribution possible



Company Contribution
At least **50%** of the eligible project costs

Project Duration
12 – 30 months

Contract Type
Service Contract between GIZ and the company

An **Expert Committee** supports the (technical) selection of applications.

Expert Committee to Support Project Selection

An **expert committee** supports GIZ in the technical assessment of the submitted project proposals.

Requirements for the experts:

Independence and impartiality

No own economic interests in the call for proposals.

No conflicts of interest

No ownership or involvement in an applying company.

Relevant expertise

Proven knowledge of the business sector in Syria.

Task: Technical assessment and evaluation of the project proposals as the basis for the selection decision.

Who Can Apply? Two Application Windows



Companies from the EU and Switzerland

- Privately owned, for-profit company
- Legally registered and operational in an EU Member State or Switzerland
- At least **5 employees (FTE)**
- Annual turnover of at least **EUR 100,000**
- Two audited annual financial statements or equivalent independent financial evidence



Companies from Syria

- Privately owned, for-profit company
- Legally registered and operational in Syria
- At least **3 employees (FTE)**
- Operational for at least **1 year**
- **No minimum turnover,** but sufficient financial capacity and liquidity to implement the project and contribute the own contribution

Options for Collaboration

Consortium
Lead Contracting Partner

- Several companies join forces to jointly implement a project.
- A consortium may include both European and Syrian companies.
- One company acts as the lead contracting partner and assumes overall responsibility towards GIZ.
- At least one company must meet the eligibility requirements for participation.

Additional Project Partners

- Vocational training and education providers
- Associations and chambers, cooperatives
- Academic and political institutions, NGOs and foundations

Important: The roles, tasks and responsibilities of all parties involved must be clearly defined in the project proposal.

What Do We Assess in the Companies?

Performance Capacity and Reliability
Sound and economically viable companies

Financial Capacity
Creditworthiness assessment and liquidity review

Legal Requirements
Registration, ownership structure and corporate set-up



Own Contribution
Evidence of the ability to provide the agreed company contribution (financial or in-kind)

Sanctions Screening
Mandatory checks against applicable sanctions lists

Implementation Capacity
Clear responsibilities and a realistic project plan

Companies from the EU / Switzerland:
CREFO check (credit and business report)

Companies from Syria:
Local due diligence

The Four Cost Categories in the Price Sheet



Personnel Costs

at actual cost (no profit margin)

Costs for your own staff
(e.g. project management, training, implementation support).



Fees for External Experts

at market rates

Fees for external specialists
(e.g. trainers, interpreters, facilitators)
and their travel costs.



Equipment, Materials and Investments

Equipment and materials required for project implementation
(e.g. machinery, IT, training and learning materials).



Other Direct Costs

Other directly project-related costs
(e.g. depreciation, rental costs, specific services).



Note: The costs must be planned in the standardised price sheet and be duly justified.

Reimbursable and Non-Reimbursable Costs

Reimbursable Costs

Reimbursable are costs that ...

- are directly linked to the project,
- are necessary for the implementation of the agreed measures,
- are incurred during the project period,
- are verifiable and properly documented (e.g. invoices, proof of payment), and
- are of a reasonable amount.





Note: Equipment, materials and investments may account for up to **30%** of the total project costs.

Development policy–related exceptions are possible.

Non-Reimbursable Costs

Non-reimbursable are in particular ...

- overhead costs / general administrative costs (e.g. office and management costs),
- notional costs (e.g. imputed interest),
- profit mark-ups,
- provisions,
- costs that are already financed from other sources (double funding), and
- costs that are not directly related to the project or do not comply with the price sheet requirements.

What Could a Development Partnership Look Like?

A possible approach for Rana Haddad's textile company



Rana Haddad
Owner of a textile company in Aleppo

The Development Partnership at a Glance

Rana's Company + **Vocational Education & Training (VET)**

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STEP / GIZ Development Partnership (iEPW)

Joint Training Programme
Practical skills development in modern textile and garment production.

Use of Production Facilities
Partial use of both production halls as training and learning facilities.

Skills Development for the Workforce
e.g. machine operation, maintenance, quality management and efficient production processes.

Promoting Inclusive Employment
Targeted training and job creation, in particular for women and people with disabilities.

Benefits for Rana's Company

- Access to qualified skilled workers.
- More efficient and modern production.
- Stronger competitiveness (e.g. through higher quality and productivity).

Benefits for Society in Syria

- New and better employment opportunities – particularly for women.
- Strengthening of vocational education and training (VET) and its links to the labour market.
- Inclusion of people with disabilities in training and employment.

Seven Steps to a Development Partnership

1	**30. October 2026** **Call for proposals published**	
2	**By 23 December 2026** **Submit Concept Note**	Short description of the business idea and the planned development partnership.
3	**February 2027** **Pre-selection**	Review of eligibility requirements and assessment by the Evaluation Committee. **Selected companies will be invited to submit a full proposal.**
4	**By end of April 2027** **Submit Full Proposal**	Further development and detailed project proposal; support available upon request.
5	**April – June 2027** **Technical Evaluation**	Assessment of the full proposals, including interviews if needed.
6	**May / June 2027** **Administrative and Financial Review**	Due diligence, review of financial and organisational requirements, and contract finalisation.
7	**July – September 2027** **Project Start**	Implementation and support of the project for 12 to 30 months.

The Next Steps

All Information at a Glance
Eligibility, documents and further details are available on the platform “Neuanfang für Syrien” (A Fresh Start for Syria).

Key Deadline
Submit your Concept Note by **23 December 2026, 23:59 CET.**

Submission by E-Mail
syria-private-sector@giz.de

Stay in Touch
STEP aims to build long-term relationships with companies that are economically active and development-oriented in Syria.

Beyond This Call
Even if a development partnership is not possible within this call, we are happy to discuss other potential cooperation approaches and support opportunities under STEP.

We look forward to your questions and to further exchange!