

Open to Internal and External Candidates

Position Title	: Consultant to Develop Migrant-Inclusive Bank Guidelines
Duty Station	: Home-Based (Thailand)
Classification	: Consultancy
Type of Appointment	: Consultant Contract
Desired Start Date	: As soon as possible
Closing Date	: 03 May 2024
Reference Code	: CFA049/2024 (EXT)

Established in 1951, IOM is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by providing services and advice to governments and migrants.

1. ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT AND SCOPE:

Over the past three decades, Thailand has emerged as the primary destination for migrant workers from Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR), and Myanmar, with over 3.15 million registered migrant workers as of January 2024. Labour migration is a pathway to economic development for both countries of origin and countries of destination. According to the Thailand Migration Report 2019, migrant workers made up over 10 per cent of the workforce and contributed to 4.3–6.6 per cent of Thailand's gross domestic product. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, migrant workers in Thailand collectively contributed 2.8 billion United States Dollars (USD) in formal remittances to their origin countries each year. The actual remittance amount is likely higher due to the prevalent use of informal remittance channels which remain untracked.

Despite their vital socioeconomic contributions, many migrant workers are subject to financial exclusion that impedes their ability to reap the full benefits of labour migration. Migrants may face structural or practical barriers in opening bank accounts, securing loans, sending remittances through safe and affordable channels, building credit, or managing their money on digital platforms. Often, migrant workers and their families are excluded from these systems because they lack the legal status, financial resources, language proficiency or knowledge to become actively involved, or they face regulatory restrictions that prevent them from fully participating in the system.

Financial exclusion can have far-reaching consequences, exacerbating poverty and marginalization, and hindering social inclusion and economic progress for migrant workers and their families. The lack of access to affordable credit can push them into cycles of debt with high-interest lenders, while the absence of bank accounts limits their ability to invest savings and build financial security as well as send safe remittances.

Recognizing the importance of promoting financial inclusion, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through its Poverty Reduction through Safe Migration, Skills Development and Enhanced Job Placement in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Thailand (PROMISE) programme conducted a Needs Assessment of Financial Inclusion for Migrant Workers in

Thailand whereby 325 migrants from Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar were surveyed. The study sought to provide an overview of the formal financial services available for migrant workers at a systemic level, to assess migrant workers' access to these services, and to understand their personal financial management practices as well as identify financial literacy needs.

The study identified notable gaps in migrant workers' access to financial services provided by the banking sector. Only 19 per cent of surveyed migrants possessed a bank account in Thailand. Among those without bank accounts, reasons included insufficient documentation, lack of knowledge on how to open and use an account, language barriers, and not having enough money to deposit. The study further asked migrants to rate, on a scale from one to five, measures for improved access to banks in Thailand. They favored actions such as reducing paperwork (average rating: 4.17), extending opening hours (4.14), minimizing fees (4.08), and having bank personnel proficient in migrants' languages (3.97), reflecting a strong emphasis on simplicity, accessibility, and cost considerations.

The study also highlighted that banks with tailored services were successful in attracting migrant clients. For instance, Kasikorn bank, which was the first bank to introduce a Myanmar language menu in its ATMs, emerged as the most popular bank among the surveyed respondents. Meanwhile, many migrant workers had received assistance from their employers to open bank accounts, pointing to potential difficulties in navigating the account-opening process alone. These challenges may stem from the lack of standardized requirements across different banks. Given that migrants may have alternative identification documents, unfamiliarity among bank personnel may lead to refusal or requests for additional documents. A few surveyed migrants noted that they were refused a bank account as they were asked to have an employer act as a guarantor, a request typically made on a case-by-case basis. Although discrimination was not a salient factor identified in this research, a separate study on migrant customer experiences at banks in Thailand found that some migrants avoided using banking services as they did not feel welcome due to discriminatory treatment by bank personnel (UNCDF, 2017).

Furthermore, only 7 per cent of surveyed migrants used banks to send remittances, attributed to the finding that banks are the costliest remittance channel, with an average remittance fee of 3.4 per cent. Similarly, in response to Question No. 176 in Parliament dated 12 October 2023, it was estimated that only 500,000 migrant workers currently remitted through official banking systems in Thailand. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 10.C specifically targets reducing the transaction costs of remittances to less than 3 per cent of the total remittance amount, underscoring the importance of addressing the high remittance fees incurred through banking channels in Thailand.

In response to the identified challenges, IOM seeks a consultant(s) to develop a guideline that aims to address the specific needs and challenges faced by migrant workers in accessing formal financial services and offer a roadmap for banks to be more migrant-friendly while in compliance with relevant regulations and standards. Key components of the guideline will include identifying legal documents held by migrants, simplifying account opening procedures, providing language assistance, and outlining fees associated with banking services. By providing banks with practical guidance, this initiative seeks to empower them to proactively address the financial inclusion needs of migrant workers, fostering a more inclusive society. In turn, by ensuring that migrants have access to essential banking services, Thailand can harness a more inclusive financial ecosystem that not only empowers migrants but also unlocks its full economic potential.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

The primary objectives of the Migrant-Inclusive Banking Guideline include:

- Enhancing the provision of migrant-inclusive banking services by addressing the specific needs and challenges faced by migrant workers
- Facilitating greater awareness and understanding among bank personnel regarding the needs and challenges faced by migrant workers, encouraging initiatives to promote cultural sensitivity, language proficiency, and effective communication strategies when interacting with migrant clients
- Enhancing understanding of various types of identification documents held by migrant clients to prevent discriminatory practices while promoting standardization of documentation requirements

IOM seeks consultant(s) to lead the development of a concise 2-4 page paper guideline establishing a framework for banks in Thailand to effectively serve migrant customers while complying with relevant regulations. The tentative scope of the Guideline should encompass:

- Definition of Migrant Customer
- Forms of Identification Documents
- Non-Discrimination Principle
- Language Accessibility
- Costs and Affordability
- Remittance Services
- Digital Inclusion and Safety
- Monitoring and Evaluation

3. REQUIRED QUALIFICATION AND EXPERIENCE

Education:

- University degree in Development Studies, Economics, Business, Social Sciences or any relevant fields from an accredited institution.

Experiences:

- Demonstrated experience in conducting research or developing guidelines related to financial inclusion, migration, or banking practices;
- Prior involvement in projects aimed at promoting migrant rights, financial literacy, or social inclusion;
- Experience working with international organizations, government agencies, non-profit organizations or the financial sector in Thailand.

Skills:

- Proficiency in drafting clear, concise, and well-structured reports and guidelines (in both Thai and English);
- Sound knowledge of Thailand's banking regulations and practices, including familiarity with relevant laws, policies, and regulatory frameworks;
- Sound knowledge of migration in Thailand and migrants' rights, including understanding of migration trends and challenges face by migrant communities;
- Knowledge of relevant financial regulations in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Myanmar is considered an advantage;
- Ability to be flexible and responsive to text and layout changes as part of the review and feedback process;
- Strong organizational and interpersonal skills.

Languages:

- Fluency in English and Thai (oral and written) is required.

4. DESIRABLE COMPENTENCIES**Values**

- Inclusion and respect for diversity: respects and promotes individual and cultural differences; encourages diversity and inclusion wherever possible.
- Integrity and transparency: maintains high ethical standards and acts in a manner consistent with organizational principles/rules and standards of conduct.
- Professionalism: demonstrates ability to work in a composed, competent and committed manner and exercises careful judgment in meeting day-to-day challenges.
- Courage: demonstrates willingness to take a stand on issues of importance.
- Empathy: shows compassion for others, makes people feel safe, respected and fairly treated.

Core Competencies

- Teamwork: Establishes strong relationships with colleagues and partners; relates well to people at all levels.
- Delivering results: Manages time and resources efficiently, monitoring progress and making adjustments as necessary.
- Managing and sharing knowledge: Shares knowledge and learning willingly, and proactively seeks to learn from the experiences of others.
- Accountability: Takes ownership of all responsibilities within own role and honours commitments to others and to the Organization.
- Communication: Encourages others to share their views, using active listening to demonstrate openness and to build understanding of different perspectives.

Other

Any offer made to the candidate in relation to this vacancy notice is subject to funding confirmation.

Appointment will be subject to certification that the candidate is medically fit for appointment and verification of residency, visa and authorizations by the concerned Government, where applicable.

Only candidates residing in either the country of the duty station or from a location in a neighboring country that is within commuting distance of the duty station will be considered. In all cases, a prerequisite for taking up the position is legal residency in the country of the duty station, or in the neighboring country located within commuting distance, and work permit, as applicable.

How to apply:

Interested candidates are invited to submit their applications to the IOM Bangkok Human Resources Unit at e-mail bkkrecruitment@iom.int by **03 May 2024** at the latest.

Kindly indicate the reference code **CFA049/2024 (EXT)** followed by your full name in the subject line.

Applications should include:

- A cover letter that identified relevant skills and experiences against the Terms of Reference and indicates the dates of availability for this position
- A curriculum vitae
- A duly completed IOM Personal History Form which can be downloaded from <https://thailand.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl1371/files/Vacancies/Form/iom-personal-history-form270122.xls>.
- A financial proposal with breakdown of costs

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

Posting period:

From 22.04.2024 – 03.05.2024