KNOWLEDGE GIFT TITLE:	COUNTRY(IES) / REGION:	LEAD ORGANISATION:
From Conflict to Collaboration: Ecosystem Building and Fragility	**Iraq**	**GIZ**

CHALLENGE / PROBLEM

In fragile contexts, entrepreneurial ecosystems are shattered along the lines of conflict. There is a general lack of collaboration and interaction. This affects not only the entrepreneurs but all stakeholders of the ecosystem and related fields ranging from finance to policy.

MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS MADE

There is a general lack of communication and collaboration between local segments of entrepreneurial ecosystems in conflict countries due to the traumatic effects of conflict and its aftermath.

SOLUTION OFFERED

Our "Activities Based Ecosystem Building" approach presents a solution to develop entrepreneurial ecosystems in fragile contexts. At a first kick-off workshop, a joint "Technology and Entrepreneurship Alliance" has been formed with makerspaces, incubators and coworking spaces from across the country, that immediately started common activities. A nationwide Hackathon was simultaneously implemented in five cities and broadcasted live via Facebook with an overwhelming resonance. Working together on shared problems puts a focus on common goals rather than divisions and establishes a joint vision for the future. Furthermore, branding and organizational development workshops lead to a consolidation of the process. Through the "Alliance", the ecosystem today has leverage in topics ranging from policy advisory to attracting investment. Entrepreneurship can thus promote stability in fragile regions.

ILLUSTRATION / VISUAL

Iraq Innovation Hackathon

THE HACKATHON IN NUMBERS

- **731** YOUNGS REGISTERED
- **57** TEAMS FORMED
- **43** MENTORS HELPED
- **27** EXPERT JUDGES
- **5** ACTIVE CITIES
- **18** PARTICIPATING CITIES
- **10** WINNING TEAMS
- **61** VOLUNTEERED

ON SOCIAL MEDIA ORGANICALLY

- **500+** ORIGINAL POSTS
- **10.5K+** ENGAGED PEOPLE
- **1.75M+** TOTAL REACH
- **2.3M+** IMPRESSIONS

Sponsored by: giz, zain
Organised by: Iraq Technology and Entrepreneurship Alliance, re-coded, THE STATION, 51 LABS, Mosul Space
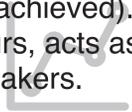Partner

OUTPUTS CREATED

The "Technology and Entrepreneurship Alliance" elaborated a manifesto on common goals. The approach has been presented in various webinars as a possible solution to overcome the fragmentation of ecosystems in the context of fragility.
Out of the Iraq Innovation Hackathon, i.a. the "Iraq Recycling Project" was created, dedicated to creating 3D-printer filaments out of recycled plastic bottles and plastic waste as well as "Zaat - project" which promotes transparent recycling bins, where an innovative process of automated collection and smashing up of plastic bottles can be witnessed, thereby incentivizing the recycling of plastic waste.

INDICATORS / SCALE / IMPACT

Key indicator: At least three communities of the ecosystem are participating in a joint, solution oriented activity.
Scale: The "Tech Alliance" is operating on a nationwide level.
Impact: Creation of a nationwide entrepreneurial network (achieved). The Alliance is lobbying to remove barriers for entrepreneurs, acts as a landing base for foreign investment and advises policy makers.

PARTNERS

Key partners are Incubators, Coworking Spaces, Innovation Hubs and Makerspaces as well as their respective entrepreneurial communities in the various regions of Iraq. The partners have organized, marketed and implemented the collaborative activities and are constituting the "Technology and Entrepreneurship Alliance".

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS / UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLE

Use the cohesive powers of joint activity and the connective act of working towards a common goal to overcome separation and mistrust.
"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." (Henry Ford)

REPLICATION POTENTIAL / SUSTAINABILITY

The "Activities Based Ecosystem Building" approach can be replicated to any context where there is a lack of collaboration between the various segments of an ecosystem.
The solution supports the building of a framework necessary for the creation of financially sustainable startups and facilitates the establishment of market-driven, entrepreneurship-friendly policies.

TOPICAL FOCUS

- [ ] MSME segmentation & entrepreneur-centred approaches
- [ ] Interplay between financial & non-financial services
- [ ] MSME support in digital era
- [ ] Entrepreneurial eco-systems & local advisory service providers
- [x] New trends in MSME development

- [ ] Green
- [ ] Gender
- [x] Fragility

SUB-TOPIC SELECTED   Transforming war economy