



► Terms of Reference

Developing In-House Learning and Capacity Development Strategy for Social Security Department in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Social Protection Consultancy
September 2024 – February 2025

BACKGROUND

Social protection is an important policy tool for the realization of human security and achieving equity and social justice for all. Social protection not only contributes to poverty reduction and managing lifecycle risks but also enhances productivity, supports fair and inclusive economic growth, contributes to the formalization of the informal economy, and improves convergence from public to private sector, thus stimulating economic growth and creating decent employment opportunities.

At the national level, Iraq's commitment to building a comprehensive social protection system is demonstrated by the ratification of ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) (Law No. 3 of 2021 in the Official Gazette of Iraq in 2021). With the ratification of Convention No. 102, ensuring compliance with its normative framework has now become a legal obligation. The legislative reform that extends social security coverage to workers in the private sector has, therefore, become instrumental as indeed an effective social security coverage in Iraq, including in the Kurdistan region of Iraq (KRI), is limited.

Currently, social security in the KRI is regulated by the Law on Workers Pension and Social Security Law no. 39 of 1971 (Law no. 39) and the Law Amending the Implementation of the Workers Pension and Social Security Law no. 39 of 1971 in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (Law no. 4), published in the KRI Chronicle and enforced on 1 July 2012. Law no. 39 sets out the social security entitlements for employees to old-age pension, disability pension, survivor benefits, among others, as well as compulsory contributions to the national fund from employers and employees. Law no. 4 contains some provisions on short-term benefits, including maternity and unemployment, which are, however, not accessible in the KRI.

In December 2022, in the KRI there were 38,491 employers registered in the private scheme and 138,092 persons had at least one contribution made for them in 2022. Of them only around 32 per cent were women. According to the data provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) in the KRI, in February 2024 there were 752 recipients of the private sector pension in the KRI, and another 174 KRI citizens were receiving private sector pension from the Federal budget. The effectiveness of social security coverage in the KRI, therefore, remains limited.

The legislative reform that extends social security coverage to workers in the private sector is therefore urgently needed. With a draft Law on the Pension and Social Security for Private Sector Workers being ready to be considered by the National Assembly, the KRI will get on track to build a comprehensive and equitable social protection system, including floors.

OBJECTIVE

The International Labour Organization (ILO) aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Social Security Department (SSD) in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq by supporting SSD in developing its visions and ensuring that all staff members are well-equipped with and have sustainable access to knowledge on the basics of social security, including its principles and place in the social protection system, governance and administration, service delivery



and accountability and other related topics in line with the right-based approach to social protection and international labour standards, to deliver on the new vision. Building on several training initiatives previously conducted by the ILO in cooperation with the International Training Centre of ILO (ITC-ILO), this initiative seeks to help SSD to develop its Institutional Theory of Change (TOC) and institutionalise these efforts and ensure that the approach to capacity development on social security within the KRI is more strategic, coherent and sustainable.

Thus, the objective of these Terms of Reference is to select a qualified international consultant or a non-profit organization to support institutional capacity development of Social Security Department in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. More specifically, this consultancy seeks to help the Social Security Department in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq to vision its future and strategize it through the new TOC, develop an in-house staff development strategy tailored to different profiles of social security staff, and to the extent possible, institutionalize and internalize its delivery to ensure sustainable approach to staff capacity development.

SCOPE OF ASSIGNMENT

Under the technical supervision of the Chief Technical Advisor on Social Security, the Technical Officer on Social Protection and the National Project Officer based in ILO-Erbil, with overall guidance of the Senior Social Protection Specialist of the ILO Decent Work Team of the ILO Regional Office for the Arab States, an individual international consultant or a qualified non-profit organization will carry out the following activities:

Developing Institutional Theory of Change (TOC):

- Analyse MoLSA SSD's mid- and long-term institutional vision, mission, core values, institutional mandate, and strategy for development, including vis-à-vis socio-economic policy and development goals and objectives;
- Support MoLSA SSD to develop an institutional theory of change (TOC) to serve as a vision statement for institutional growth and development, including for the In-House Strategy for Staff Learning and Development.

Distinguishing Tiers of Expertise and Understanding Staff Development Needs vis-à-vis TOC:

- Develop a talent mapping system within SSD to determine levels of specialisation and identify staff who have received different types of training from ILO, ITC-ILO, ISSA, ILO-UNICEF TRANSFORM or other institutions.
- Distinguish multiple tiers of existing and required expertise going from basic induction to expert levels in different sub-themes to be identified vis-à-vis the TOC, institutional scope of work and staff profiles.
- Conduct a detailed assessment of learning needs of both new recruits and acting DSS staff vis-à-vis minimum knowledge, skills and capacity requirements for the administration of social security, especially those with limited exposure to learning opportunities.

Assessing SSD In-House Approach to Staff Learning and Development vis-à-vis TOC:

- Analyse the SSD approach to in-house learning and development, encompassing onboarding processes and on-the-job technical training on social security, past, ongoing and forthcoming education/training initiatives, available training materials and capacities.
- Understand the institutional setup for administering in-house learning and staff capacity development, including identifications of potential staff learning coordinators and assessment of available infrastructure (premises, IT equipment, etc) for in-house learning delivery and administration.
- Based on the SSD staffing structure, the scope of work defined in internal regulations, TOC, multiple tiers of expertise, Institutional Assessment conducted by the ILO in 2023 and the analyses of selected social security business processes commissioned by the ILO in 2024, define knowledge, skills and capacity requirements for SSD experts of different levels and different profiles (e.g. front-desk staff, data entry clerks, claim processing officers, payment administrators).

Developing a Comprehensive In-House Learning and Staff Development Strategy:

- Support the development of a comprehensive strategy for in-house staff learning and development tailored to the identified and anticipated knowledge, skills and capacity needs for administering social security in the KRI and to the specific work profiles and daily activities of different profiles of DSS staff. The strategy should consider institutional set-up for capacity development and available resources, including human, financial and infrastructural.
- Develop viable, sustainable and cost-efficient solutions to institutionalize the proposed learning and staff development strategy within the SSD. To the extent possible, the proposed solutions should be based on the existing institutional set up and available resources. Whenever the existing set up is not sufficient or adequate, alternative should be proposed (e.g. outsourcing training delivery), with relevant costs approximated to evaluate their feasibility.

Designing Training Curriculum, Learning Materials and Resources:

- Develop a training curriculum aligned to the goals and objectives of the in-house learning and staff development strategy;
- Identify and review existing training modules (e.g. developed by ITC-ILO, ISSA, TRANSFORM) to support the proposed curriculum and ensure their adaptation to the learning needs of the SSD staff, as well as to develop missing training modules. These modules may cover essential topics such as the basics of social protection and social security, extension of social security coverage, social security administration, service delivery, and monitoring and evaluation. It is critical to ensure that the training modules incorporate practical examples, case studies, and real-life scenarios relevant to the context of the KRI to facilitate better understanding and application of knowledge.
- Develop training and learning materials for SSD staff as per the curriculum (booklets, manuals, etc.).
- Develop training and learning materials (modules, training manuals, handouts, etc) for trainers to be equipped for delivering training to SSD staff in line with the proposed curriculum.
- Develop pre-and post-training assessment tools. Propose innovative methods for measuring the effectiveness of the training and knowledge and skills uptake and utilization.
- Propose viable and cost-efficient solutions to institutionalize the training, including by developing interactive self-paced digital learning solution.

DELIVERABLES

The selected consultant will produce the following deliverables:

- Deliverable 1 Inception report** – a concise report outlining conceptual framework, detailed research methodology, key existing resources, stakeholders, timeline and workplan plan for implementation. It also includes a bibliography with key secondary information sources to inform research design and implementation.
- Deliverable 2 Institutional Theory of Change** – a succinct paper defining mid- and long-term vision, mission, core values and institutional objectives of MoLSA DSS and guiding institutional development objectives.
- Deliverable 3 Tiers of expertise, staff learning needs assessment and talent map** – a detailed document distinguishing multiples existing and required tiers of expertise in identified sub-themes/sub-areas vis-à-vis the TOC, assessing learning needs of SSD staff in line with their different roles and profiles, and talent map of staff with exposure to prior training in social protection or social security. The report should also identify staff with a potential to serve as learning coordinators and master trainers.
- Deliverable 4 Analyses of SSD In-House Approach to Staff Learning and Development** – a detailed report outlining the main approach to SSD in-house learning and capacity
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development, minimum learning requirements in line with the current state-of-the-art structure, internal regulations and procedures, existing institutional set up for staff capacity development, gaps in and opportunities for in-house learning and staff.

- Deliverable 5 Draft In-House Learning and Staff Development Strategy** – a draft of holistic strategy for SSD to enhance knowledge and capacities of its staff in line with the best practices and requirements of social security service delivery. Draft strategy is expected to be presented to and validated with the SSD management in the course of a one-day workshop.
- Deliverable 6 Training Curriculum, Learning Materials and Resources** – a comprehensive training package comprising of training modules and teaching materials for master-trainers; training curriculum and learning materials for SSD staff; knowledge assessment and evaluation tools; proposal for institutionalization of the training; any other documents as deems necessary.
- Deliverable 7 Proposal on Institutionalization of Staff Learning and Development Strategy** – viable, sustainable and cost-efficient solutions to institutionalize and implement the proposed learning and staff development strategy with existing SSD institutional structures. The proposal should also include suggestions on changes and adjustments in the institutional set-up, internal processes, staffing structure, etc, as well as alternative solutions for the implementation (e.g. outsourcing) that may be required for the successful institutionalization and implementation of the Strategy. Feasibility, sustainability and costing of the proposed solutions must be considered.
- Deliverable 8 Final Draft of In-House Learning and Staff Development Strategy** – the final draft of the In-House Staff Learning and Development Strategy with suggestions on changes and adjustments to the existing structures and processes, as well as alternative solutions for the implementation, with the assessment of their feasibility, sustainability and costing, to be presented to the SSD at one-day workshop.
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Each deliverable is expected to be submitted for ILO approval before considered final. The ILO will review initial drafts before finalization and onward continuation with the exercise. The deliverables will also be reviewed and validated by the SSD. It is expected that consultant will address and integrate comments and suggestions received from the ILO and SSD to the deliverables. All the deliverables are expected to be produced in English and Kurdish.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The contract shall only be awarded to a qualified individual international consultant or non -profit organization with the following skills and qualifications:

- Relevant qualification in the fields of social protection, social policy, economics, public policy or other relevant field;
- At least seven years of proven experience in undertaking works of a similar nature, specifically related to capacity development of social security institutions, designing and implementing institutional learning strategies and providing capacity development services on social protection and social security;
- Excellent understanding of the ILO's approach to social protection and demonstratable experience in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating capacity development initiatives on social protection and/or social security in line with the International Labour Standards, including ILO Convention 102 and

Recommendation 202. Familiarity with ITC-ILO trainings, ISSA guidelines and TRANSFORM will be an advantage;

- Familiarity with social protection system in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq or experience in working on social protection in Iraq or other countries in the Middle East;
- Experience in conducting visioning exercise and developing TOCs for public institution working on social or economic policy, employment, social protection or other relevant sphere;
- Demonstrable experience in similar consultancy assignments (either with public, private, international organizations, including UN agencies such as ILO, ITC-ILO and UNICEF);
- Excellent command of English, both written and oral, knowledge of Kurdish language (Sorani or Badini dialect) and/or Arabic would be an advantage;
- Excellent competence in information technology, including statistical, document drafting and presentation software (Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint and other relevant software packages);
- Strong interpersonal and planning skills, attention to detail, strategic thinking and ability to relate effectively with a wide array of stakeholders.

ASSIGNMENT DURATION AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

The proposed duration of the assignment is six (6) months (24 weeks), from inception to completion, with the intended start in September-October 2024. A detailed timeline with deliverables is to be proposed by the implementing partner in the inception report. The tentative timeline is as follows:

Deliverable	Indicative timeline/Deadline	Percentage	Payment
Deliverable 1	2 weeks after contract signature	20%	First progress payment
Deliverable 2	5 weeks after contract signature	20%	Second progress payment
Deliverable 3	8 weeks after contract signature		
Deliverable 4	11 weeks after contract signature	20%	Third progress payment
Deliverable 5	14 weeks after contract signature		
Deliverable 6	17 weeks after contract signature	20%	Fourth progress payment
Deliverable 7	20 weeks after contract signature		
Deliverable 8	24 weeks after contract signature	20%	Final payment

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

The ILO invites qualified individual international consultants or non-profit organizations to submit their proposals comprising of technical and financial as per the requirements specified below.

Technical Proposal

Individual international consultants or non-profit organizations shall describe in the Technical Proposal how they intend to meet the requirements described in these Terms of Reference.

In preparing the Technical Proposal, the individual international consultants or non-profit organizations shall review all requirements and reflect their understanding of and approach to meeting these requirements in the Technical Proposal.

In preparing the Technical Proposal, the individual international consultants or non-profit organizations shall provide details of the proposed methodology to approach the assignment, feasible timeline, implementation and management plan as well as CV(s) of experts assigned to the project with a history of implementing similar projects or working on a similar assignment as specified in this Terms of Reference.

Individual international consultants or non-profit organizations may also add any other document and information to demonstrate their technical and professional capacities and competencies to fulfil the requirements as specified in the Terms of Reference. Other documents may include but are not limited to academic and technical publication, reference letters, etc.

The Technical Proposal should be submitted in PDF format, with each page duly signed and dated. In case of non-profit organizations, if relevant, each page of the Technical Proposal should also be stamped.

Financial Proposal

Individual international consultants or non-profit organizations shall submit the Financial Proposal in US Dollar following the table/format below using an Excel sheet, and submit both the Excel and the PDF versions. Each page of the Financial Proposal in the PDF format should be duly signed and dated. In case of non-profit organizations, if relevant, each page of the Financial Proposal in the PDF format should also be stamped. The Financial Proposal should be valid for 90 days after the deadline for submissions.

Budget breakdown				
Deliverables	Number of working days	Daily rate	Possible other costs (e.g. translation, travel)	Total
Deliverable 1				
Deliverable 2				
Deliverable 3				
Deliverable 4				
Deliverable 5				
Deliverable 6				
Deliverable 7				

Application Process

Interested candidates with the required qualifications and experience should submit their Technical and Financial Proposals in English in line with the requirements specified above to iraq-procurement@ilo.org with the subject



line **“Developing In-House Learning and Capacity Development Strategy for Social Security Department in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq”** no later than **29 August 2024**. Incomplete applications or applications not matching the requirements specified in these Terms of Reference will not be considered.

Evaluation Process and Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by an Evaluation Panel, to determine compliance with the requirements specified in the ToRs.

A two-stage procedure will be utilized in evaluating the Proposals, with evaluation of each Technical Proposal constituting 70% of the total grade being completed prior to any Financial Offer which constitute 30% of the total grade being opened and compared.

Each Technical Proposal (70% of total grading) is evaluated on the basis of its responsiveness to these Terms of Reference according to the criteria described below. With the maximum score of 70 points, the minimum passing score is 60 points:

1. 30 points for understanding of the Terms of Reference and the aim of the services to be provided, clarity of the proposal, overall methodological approach, appropriateness of tools and estimated difficulties and challenges;
2. 20 points for feasibility of the implementation and management plan with a timeline related to the different activities;
3. 10 points for relevance of qualifications and experience of individual consultant/proposed key personnel;
4. 10 points for proven experience in similar consultancy assignments.

During the second stage of the evaluation, the Financial Proposals (30% of total grading) of all qualified individual international consultants or non-profit organizations which have attained at least the minimum score during the technical evaluation (60 points) will be compared. The maximum number of points – 30 points – will be assigned to the lowest Financial Proposal submitted by applicants. All other Financial Proposals will receive points in inverse proportion.

The process of evaluating the proposals will be based on the percentage combination of Technical and Financial elements.