

Terms of Reference

Call for institutions interested in convening ‘Talks Development Initiatives in Iraq’

Background

Over the past few decades, Iraq has enjoyed a favourable demographic profile characterized by the working-age population expanding at a higher rate than the general population, widely referred to as the “demographic window of opportunity”. While the expansion of the working-age population, and the concomitant enlargement of the labour force, can be the driver for sustained economic growth, Iraq inability to create sufficient jobs to absorb the rapidly growing labour force has led to waves of social unrest. Youth unemployment is especially alarming estimated at 22 percent and 66 percent for male and female labour force participants, respectively. This age and gender dimension to the unemployment ratios in Iraq is coupled with the low participation rate of female citizens in the labour market, currently at only 11.76 percent in comparison of male labour for participation at 74 percent.

These two factors (low participation rates among female citizens and high unemployment rate) have not allowed Iraq to translate the demographic window of opportunity into an economic window of opportunity. Out of the 23 million in the working age population, only 9.2 million employed. With this large demand for employment, the share of the private sector remains low at only 40 - 50 percent of the labour force. Moreover, the main feature that characterizes Iraq’s labour market is the high degree of informality. Reports suggest that about two-thirds of workers in Iraq are likely to be informal (with self-employed is estimated to account for 40 percent of Iraq’s private sector. Women with low levels of education and skills are often self-employed and concentrated in typically informal private sector activities. Informal work is characterized by decent work deficits, including low wages, limited rights at work, and weak job and income protection. One of the decent work deficits relate to the limited social security coverage for private sector workers.

The Covid-19 pandemic, coupled with movement control measures, exposed fragility of Iraqis economy. In just a few weeks or days, hundreds of thousands have become unemployed as businesses are forced to shut down temporarily or permanently, or operate at minimal level, causing tremendous financial hardship especially for the daily wage and irregular wage earners.

Objective

Against this background, and in order to respond to these changes and to address the effects of these changes on poverty and inequality, there is a need to initiate an inclusive platform to build support and political capital in favour of effective policies to unleash Iraq’s potential and translate Iraq’s ‘demographic gift’ into sustained economic growth path, and along the way providing opportunities for Iraqis to access rights (education, health, etc.) and move out of poverty. To actualize this shift and achieve a ‘big push’ in development will depend on Iraq’s ability to generate sufficient jobs, accomplish an inclusive labour market for all Iraqis, extend protection not only to public civil servants but to all workers, and achieve improvement in labour productivity.

The proposed ‘Talk Development’ platform aims at bringing in though leaders to discuss and debate future directions of Iraq and propose evidence-based home-grown and scalable solutions that balance the economic growth friendliness and social inclusivity objectives to promote an economically productive and socially inclusive Iraq.

Procedure:

This platform will be convened on monthly basis virtually and invite policymakers, researchers, national and international development thought leaders, and civil society to exchange ideas, knowledge, experiences, and views on Iraq's development (past and ongoing). Lessons learned from local, regional, and international expertise can be also presented at this platform. Ultimately, this platform will provide a tool to stimulate constructive dialogue leading to policy messages for policy makers and advocate for prioritization of resources.

A thought leader will be the main guest where the host moderate a conversation with her/him on a specific issue that is selected earlier. The host will also field some questions from the audience but keep the discussion conversational.

The Talk Development platform will be broadcasted live on YouTube, with a channel created for this purpose.

DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULE OF PAYMENT:

Activity / Output	Timeline/Deadline
1. One-year Workplan submission	By Nov 10 2022
2. Platform website launched	By Nov 20 2022
3. Convene first three Talk Development initiatives (online) November, October, and December 22	BY Dec 31 2022
4. Convene First in-person Talk Development initiatives 20 Jan 23	BY Jan 31 2023
5. Convene second three Talk Development initiatives (online) Feb, March April 23	BY April 31 2023
6. Convene second in-person Talk Development initiatives May 23	By May 31 2023
7. Convene Third three Talk Development initiatives (Online) June, July, Aug 23	By Aug 31 2023
8. Convene Third in-person Talk Development initiatives in Sep 23	BY Sep 31 2023
9. Monthly report	Should be submitted at the end of each workshop
10. Final Report	By Oct 15, 2023

Timeframe for the contract

Period for the contract will be from 20 Nov, 2022 31Oct, 2023

Payment schedule

- 20 percent upon the delivery of accepted workplan
- 20 percent upon completion of outputs/activities 3-4
- 20 percent upon completion of output/activity 5-6
- 20 percent upon completion of output/activity 7-8
- 20 percent upon completion of all activities 9-10

Required background qualifications, experience, and competencies

The firm should have the following experience, expertise, and competencies:

- Must have a strong social media footprint demonstrated by relevant channels and viewership records
- Must have media expertise including relevance to disseminating news items, social policy reporting, and other relevant areas.
- Strong networking with a variety of stakeholders including local leaders, national leaders, development partners, diplomats, academia, religious leaders.
- Must have previous experience in organizing inclusive platforms to discuss and debate policy issues and socio-economic debate.
- Ability to connect and bridge experience through Iraqi thought leaders living abroad and Iraqi thought leaders living in Iraq to stimulate discussions involving international and national expertise.
- Team members have relevant qualification to the assignment scope
- Knowledge of or experience in the local context where events will take place
- Proven ability to analyze and deal with multiple stakeholders and to prepare reports and publications of a high quality, technically sound with policy-oriented conclusions and recommendations.

Submission and Receipt of Proposals

It is the responsibility of Bidder to ensure that a Proposal is submitted to the ILO strictly in accordance with the stipulations in the solicitation documents.

Proposals **must be received on or before 28/9/2022 by 23:59 Baghdad Time**. Proposals and modifications to Proposals received after the proposal receipt deadline will be rejected. Proposals must include all the documents requested in these Instructions to Bidders and shall be submitted by:

Email to:

farman@ilo.org and alkaram@ilo.org

The technical and financial proposals should be submitted as separate documents, both in PDF format.

Official Language

The Proposal and all correspondence and documents related to the Proposal shall be written in English and Arabic language