

Terms of Reference (ToR) for a Consultant (Research Assistant)

Lessons learned in

promoting Women's empowerment in the context of the care economy in Lebanon

Background

Today, care is provided in myriad forms, from childcare to care for older persons and persons with disabilities or illness with support needs. The need for care is growing worldwide, driven by demographic shifts including the growing ageing population and the rising number of persons living with chronic illnesses. Despite the growing demand for care services, those working in the care economy (most typically informal, women workers) often experience low wages, limited benefits and poor working conditions. In addition, there are 2 billion potential parents living in countries without adequate maternity protection, paternity and parental leave, and quality childcare services with decent care jobs. This creates gender inequalities in the world of work because the responsibilities of caring have historically been born by women and girls, particularly those from disadvantaged groups and facing intersecting forms of discrimination, most often in the form of unpaid work at home or in the informal economy (ILO, 2022). Such inequalities were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has exposed the vulnerabilities of the care economy and made clear the need for a more equitable and sustainable approach.

In Lebanon, and prior to the 2019 economic crisis, care duties were mainly performed by underpaid (and sometimes unpaid) women migrant workers employed through the kafala (sponsorship) system that operates outside the national labour law, and which places these workers at risk of a range of decent work deficits, including forced labour. In the last four years, recruitment of migrant workers in the country has been decreasing, while the need for home-based care work remained at the same level. The decrease in migrant workers was mainly the result of the economic crisis, which led to the devaluation of the local currency and a shortage of foreign currency, reducing the ability of families to pay recruitment fees and wages of migrant workers, and diminishing the interest of migrant workers to come to Lebanon. Currently, the stigma surrounding care work impacts the involvement of national workers in the sector. At the same time, care workers are not covered by the national labour law, directly blocking their access to the social protection system in the country and, as such, defining care workers as informal workers. The lack of formalization of this sector not only acts as a barrier to employment and social protection of care workers, it also can reduce the quality-of-care provision when care workers do not have the necessary competencies to care for children, older persons, persons with disabilities with support needs and other care recipients., which can contribute to the negative health and developmental outcomes of care recipients. The lack of oversight and accountability in this sector has led to a vicious circle of a care economy that operates outside of the regulation or protection of the state.

With values of social justice, equity, democracy, and decent work for all, cooperatives, and other entities in the social and solidarity economy (SSE), have emerged as an innovative solution to the care crisis (ILO,

2016; 2017) and important vehicles of the ILO's 5R Framework for Decent Care Work the ILO road map to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work and reward and represent care workers (ILO, 2018). Research suggests that social and solidarity economy entities provide better work and conditions for workers in care sectors, such as regularized hours, formal employment, access to benefits, and bargaining power. This is especially true when accounting for context-specific care needs, along with the political, legislative, social, and economic contexts.

In this context, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is implementing the WE Care project which aims at structuring a response to home-based care work needs in Lebanon and pave the way to professionalise the sector through greater formalisation and regulation of care services, in line with decent work principles, and by exploring cooperatives and small enterprises as entry points and following a community-based approach. The project complements a digital initiative led by the Ministry of Labour, a digital platform that enables job matching and provide information on labour rights in the care sector. The project uses community-based approach to explore ways to increase worker's influence on the platform, and to learn from emerging innovative initiatives in other parts of the world¹, and to challenge the stigma that affect domestic workers.

The ILO is a specialized agency of the United Nations, bringing together government, employers' and workers' representatives to promote decent work around the world. The WE Care project is implemented by ILO's Regional Office of Arab States in Lebanon with technical backstopping from ILO's Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI) which is responsible for promoting gender equality and respect for diversity in the world of work and managing the ILO's programme on HIV and AIDS. The Branch also strives for the promotion of a more balanced sharing of unpaid care work at home and between families and the State through more investments in care policies and measures with quality care jobs as a key pillar of the ILO gender-transformative agenda (ILO, 2019).

Objective

The ILO seeks to hire an individual consultant to document the lessons learned which would emerge from the implementation of the project to inform future interventions. The assignment entails identifying the lesson, detailing the context in which the lesson was learned, and analyze the implications of the lessons for future interventions.

As the project is implemented in the two areas of Bourj Hammoud and Ghobeiry, the community will be consulted during the documentation process.

Key informant interviews will be required as well as attendance of events, and findings will be compiled in a final publication which will be presented to stakeholders and broader audience interested in the thematic areas covered by the project.

Scope of Work

Under the direct supervision of the ILO WE CARE project manager, the consultant is expected to carry out the following tasks:

- Conduct an overview of community initiatives related to home-based care in Lebanon

¹ [Spotlight Interviews with Co-operators: Brightly® – Scaling up worker cooperatives through the franchise model](#)

- Design a methodology on data collection and tracking of results related to WE CARE to identify the lessons learned
- Participate in community events to capture the context and the lessons learned
- Document with photographs from events (with written consent that ILO Can use the photos)
- Monitor the traffic on the care digital platform to analyze trends and document lessons learned
- Submit an outline on the lessons learned
- Submit lessons learned capturing the lesson, the context on how the lesson was learned, and implications for future interventions
- Compile the lessons learned in one comprehensive document
- Coordinate with graphic designer and translator to produce a ready to publish document
- Keep a record of all documents reviewed, and interviews conducted
- Support relevant community initiatives as requested by the WE Care project manager.

Working modality

The consultant is expected to work from home with frequent visits to the ILO and the field as the assignment requires. The ILO will not be responsible to provide any IT equipment or cover internet access required for the assignment. Cost should be captured and reflected in the financial offer.

Deliverables

1. An inception report detailing the methodology to carry out the assignment, data collection tools, list of stakeholders, draft outline of the lessons learned report.
2. 4 Interim reports 5-8 pages each, presenting the lessons learned captured during the month, including progress on the usage of the digital platform with recommendations if action is required to address challenges. The interim reports will be compiled into one draft report documenting the lessons learned.
3. Final report integrating ILO and Stakeholders feedback
4. Record of interviews and photos
5. Power point presentation with main findings based on the final report

Timeline

The Duration of Assignment is expected to be 40 working days from the date of signing the contract until end of August 2024 as per the following table outlines:

Task	Responsible Person	# of Working Days
Briefing with the ILO Desk Review of programme related documents Visit to the communities conducted within the scope of the project Identification of stakeholders Inception report including the methodology to carry out the assignment, data collection tools, list of stakeholders, draft outline of the lessons learned report	Consultant	8

Participation in events, review of activity reports, interviews with key stakeholders to collect data	Consultant	12
Drafting of interim report on lessons learned (covering the period August-October 2023)	Consultant	4
Drafting of interim report on lessons learned (covering the period November 2023-March 2024)	Consultant	4
Drafting of interim report on lessons learned (covering the period April 2024-July 2024)	Consultant	4
Submit final draft report integrating all interim reports, in addition to power point presentation and records of interviews and photos	Consultant	8
Quality check by ILO team Disseminate lessons learned report	ILO	
Total (Consultant)		40

Reporting

The consultant will report to WE CARE project manager, who will coordinate with ILO ROAS DW team, GEDI to provide inputs and guidance to the consultant during the assignment. Regular meetings will be organized for the consultant to share updates with WE CARE project and consult on the assignment.

Budget & Payment

The ILO will provide the consultant with a lump sum payment to cover all expenses related to the assignment. Payment will be paid in different installments against satisfactory delivery as follow:

20% upon submission of the inception report

20% upon submission of the first interim report covering September-November 2023

20% upon submission of the second interim report December 2023-April 2024

20% upon submission of the third interim report May 2024-July 2024

20% upon completion of delivery by submitting the final report, records, power point presentation.

Qualifications & Experience

Interested candidates should have the following qualifications:

- At least seven years of relevant professional experience in social and economic development or related fields
- Proven record of work on thematic areas related to gender equality and community development
- Prior experience working with the ILO or other UN agencies
- Strong analytical and writing skills in English

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to engage with diverse stakeholders
- Ability to travel within the country
- High level of integrity and respect of confidentiality on stories shared by stakeholders
- Excellent command of English and Arabic

Proposal

Proposals to be submitted to mezher@ilo.org by 17 July 2023.

Interested candidates should submit their CV, cover letter which describes why you are the most suitable person to take this assignment by including information on your relevant experience and achievements, and three references familiar with your work. A financial offer should also be submitted based on the below template. It should be a lump sum based on the deliverables noted above for an all-inclusive cost including transportation.

Financial offer template

	Deliverable	Lump sum (in USD)
1	Inception report including the methodology to carry out the assignment, data collection tools, list of stakeholders, draft outline of the lessons learned report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk Review of programme related documents • Visit to the communities conducted within the scope of the project • Identification of stakeholders 	
2	First interim report covering September-November 2023	
3	Second interim report December 2023-April 2024	
4	Third interim report May 2024-July 2024	
5	Final report, records, power point presentation	
6	Incidental costs to deliver the assignment, including travel within the country	
	Total	US\$

Selection process

Shortlisted consultants will be interviewed. Those offering the best combined technical expertise and financial offers will be selected.

Preliminary List of Relevant Sources to guide the assignment

[wcms_746730.pdf \(ilo.org\)](#)

[Care at work: Investing in care leave and services for a more gender equal world of work \(ilo.org\)](#)

[Lessons learned from Social and Solidarity Economy \(SSE\) policy development in South Africa: One-size does not fit all \(ilo.org\)](#)

[Summary of lessons Learned, Work in Freedom Programme \(ilo.org\)](#)