



Terms of Reference

Consultant to develop a **Roadmap on Formalization in the Agrifood sector**

Contract within the Period: 1 June until 15 October

Deadline for Application: 29 April 2024

BACKGROUND

The ILO estimates that more than 6 out of 10 workers and 4 out of 5 businesses worldwide operate in the informal economy. Contrary to previous expectations, informality has not decreased over time and is even increasing in some countries. In Lebanon, the Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey 2018-2019 shows that 54,9 per cent of the employed population hold informal jobs as their main job and more than 36,0 per cent of people with informal jobs were working outside of the informal sector (i.e., in the formal sector and in households).

Informality is deeply entrenched in Lebanese society, posing persistent challenges for enterprises and workers striving for fair working conditions. Unfortunately, policy efforts to address informality have been insufficient, and often counterproductive, exacerbated by various crises including the influx of Syrian refugees, political unrest, and economic collapse. The COVID-19 pandemic and the ensuing lockdowns further exacerbated the situation, causing 20 per cent of businesses to suspend or cease operations.¹ Economic turmoil, exemplified by the depreciation of the Lebanese pound and weakened social security systems, have driven the economy to an ever higher degree of informality and intensified the emigration of skilled labour, which is likely to have adverse long-term consequences for the economy.

Addressing informality in Lebanon requires a comprehensive strategy aimed at transitioning workers and enterprises from the informal to the formal economy. However, due to the existing political deadlock hindering the formulation and adoption of a national strategy, the International Labour Organization (ILO) intends to assist stakeholders in crafting an operational plan to facilitate this transition specifically within the agrifood industry. This sector, along with construction and agriculture, was identified under the SOLIFEM project. The project's reference group, comprising representatives from the government, employers and workers organizations, has collectively recognized the importance of devising a roadmap for the agrifood sector, given its significant potential and future prospects within the economy. The roadmap's development will entail collaboration among various relevant stakeholders. The roadmap may include simplifying administrative procedures for business registration, providing access to affordable formal financial services, and offering tax incentives or subsidies to formalize businesses while facilitating as well the recognition of employment relationships, the declaration of workers and their effective access to adequate protections in line with the Theory of Change² of the ILO on the transition from the informal to the formal economy. Facilitating the economic involvement of women and youth in the agri-food industry through legislative changes, increased market access and capacity-building would also help to create employment opportunities, improve working conditions and reduce informality. Additionally, measures to improve labour market regulations and enforcement mechanisms can help ensure compliance with the law, promoting decent work conditions and social protection for women and men.

¹ World Bank Group, Lebanon Economic Monitor Spring 2021: Lebanon Sinking (To the Top 3)

² [wcms_768807.pdf \(ilo.org\)](#)

The ILO is implementing the SOLIFEM project, co-financed by the EU, which is supporting the transition from the informal to the formal economy through tripartite social dialogue in Lebanon and other countries in the region, including Algeria, Egypt, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). It pursues this objective through strengthening the capacity of the ILO tripartite constituents to act through social dialogue on two fronts –first, the development of integrated strategies on formalization and second, the development of skills training and recognition systems, with a particular focus on women and youth in the informal economy. The SOLIFEM project in Lebanon is focused on three economic sectors with significant levels of informality : agriculture, agribusiness, and construction.

The SOLIFEM project is embarking on the development of a National roadmap aimed at setting operational guidelines and practical actions for the transition to the formal economy in the agrifood sector. To facilitate this process effectively, we are seeking a consultant who will be responsible for preparing for the sessions and facilitating discussions to ensure the successful development and drafting of the roadmap. Additionally, the Consultant will support the identification of stakeholders and facilitate outreach efforts to ensure broad participation and inclusivity in the roadmap development process.

OBJECTIVE

The primary goal of the mission is to collaboratively develop a roadmap including operational guidelines to support the transition to the formal economy in the agrifood sector. This will be done in consideration of recommendations stemming from the diagnosis of Lebanon's informal economy concerning both the formalization of jobs and enterprises, as well as the findings and obstacles identified regarding the enterprise registration process for the specific component of the roadmap focusing on the formalization of informal enterprises. These latter insights are derived from desk research conducted under the "Formalize your Business" tool within the SOLIFEM project framework.

SCOPE OF CONSULTANCY

- Identify from the Diagnostic study's recommendations and the field research of the Formalize your business, coupled with bilateral consultations and/ or focus group discussions, the expectations, needs, and concerns of the various actors involved in or directly affected by the process of formalizing the informal economy, with focus on the agrifood sector. These actors include ministries, government agencies, social partners, relevant service providers, as well as organizations linked to actors in the informal economy (associations, cooperatives, actors in the social and solidarity economy). While considering the information collected within the framework of the diagnosis, it is also important to gather additional information on their planned activities in this area, including action plans, for a period of 3 years;
- Translate these expectations, needs, and concerns into an integrated roadmap for formalizing the informal economy in the agrifood sector, which would include clear operational guidelines for implementation. This roadmap will be presented during a workshop with the involved partners for finalization and validation.
- As part of the roadmap, develop a detailed operational guidelines for the agrifood sector. This plan must be based on an integrated, participatory approach and social dialogue aimed at formalizing the informal economy, in compliance with Recommendation R204. It should cover agrifood sector-specific aspects or categories of workers and enterprises with cross-cutting aspects across other sectors, such as the agricultural sector. The operational guideline will need to include: access to finance, productivity and market access, support business formalization, registration, taxation, and compliance, gender equality: preventive and corrective measures, coordination, follow up and division of roles.
- Present the content of the roadmap and the operational action plan to all stakeholders for refinement, finalization, and validation.

The Consultant will be responsible for the following tasks:

- a. Conduct thorough research and analysis , based on the findings and recommendations in the diagnostic analysis on informality to prepare for the roadmap development, bilateral meetings, focus group discussions, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the context, challenges, and opportunities.

- b. Identify key stakeholders who should be involved in the roadmap development process, ensuring inclusivity and representation.
- c. Conduct bilateral meetings and focus group discussions with stakeholders identified through consultation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) to gather insights, perspectives, and recommendations for inclusion in the National Strategy.
- d. Lead and facilitate discussions during the roadmap development sessions, guiding participants towards consensus and effective decision-making.
- e. other tasks required to achieve the desired output.

DELIVERABLES

Deliverables	Activities	Number of Days	Period
1: Develop Practical Actions with operational guidelines to propose for each stakeholder.	1. Review the Diagnostic Analysis on Informality recommendations and Formalize Your Business together with guidance provided in R204 and in the Theory Of Change , have consultation meetings with ILO		first week
	2. Identify stakeholders, prepare letters for inviting stakeholders to appoint focal points for the process of developing the roadmap in Arabic Language		second week
	3.Prepare advocacy ³ lines for each stakeholder: including practical actions each can take and operational guidance on how it can be done. In English.		second week
	4.Review of Activity 3 by ILO (7 working days)	(N/A)	third week (7 working days)
	5.Amend Activity 3 in line with ILO feedback		Fourth week
2: Draft 1 of the roadmap	6. Conduct bilateral and focus group discussions ⁴ (a maximum of 6 FGD)		between the 5th and the 7th week
	7. Develop a first draft of the roadmap based on activity 5 and 6 (the roadmap will include both practical actions and operational guidelines) in English + submit to ILO for feedback		between the 7th and the 8th week
	8. Review of Activity 7 by ILO (7 working days)	(N/A)	
	9. Finalize draft 1 in English and Arabic		seventh week
3: Final Validated Roadmap	10. Prepare a concept note and invitation to the round table discussion for validation of the roadmap. In English and Arabic		fifth week
	11. Round table : Presentation and facilitation of discussion		8th week
	12. Final Validated roadmap in English and Arabic		9th week

³Based on the recommendations from the diagnostic study, identify a list of actions to be taken by certain ministries/ public institutions to support the transition to the formal economy in the agri-food sector.

⁴ The division of stakeholders among FGD will be determined later and inspired from the Formalize Your Business groups division

PAYMENT

Three instalments based on the deliverables subject to the clearance and satisfaction of the ILO:

- 20 % will be paid upon completion of Deliverable 1, as described in the deliverables section.
- 40% will be paid upon completion of deliverable 2 described in the deliverables section.
- 40% will be paid upon completion of deliverable 3 described in the deliverables section.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expression of interest should include the below:

- Curriculum Vitae with references for conducting similar type of work.
- Financial offer clearly describing the rate per day and number of days per deliverable.

All on or before **29 April 2024**, at the following email address: baderm@ilo.org

Please mention "SOLIFEM" in the subject of the email.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Education: PHD degree in economy, public policy, development studies, labour standards.
- Fluence in English and Arabic and in drafting reports in both languages.
- At least 20 years of relevant professional experience including experience working with public institutions, and development agencies, in addition to experience developing national strategies.
- Knowledge and previous working experience within the field of labour, economy, employment, or development.
- Experience working with Governments and social partners in Lebanon.

Languages

Excellent command of English and Arabic both spoken and written.

Functional Competencies

- Good knowledge of Lebanese public institutions and economic and social dynamics.
- Demonstrated analytical and technical skills.
- Ability to introduce new approaches and strategic innovations.