ILO EVALUATION

o   **Evaluation Title:**   Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy

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This evaluation has been conducted according to ILO's evaluation policies and procedures. It has not been professionally edited, but has undergone quality control by the ILO Evaluation Office.

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List of Acronyms

AP	Action Plan
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
DG	Director General
DWT	Decent Work Team
EPU	Employment Policy Unit
FR	Field Researcher
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
KEP	Kurdistan Employment Policy
KDP	Kurdish Democratic Party
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
LR	Lead Researcher
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
NEP	National Employment Policy
PES	Public Employment Services
PUK	Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
PWD	Persons With Disabilities
ROAS	Regional Office of the Arab States
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SSI	Semi-Structured Interview
TOR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNEG	United National Evaluation Group
USD	United States Dollars

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Map of the Kurdistan Region in the Republic of Iraq

Figure 1. Map of the Republic of Iraq and the Kurdistan Region

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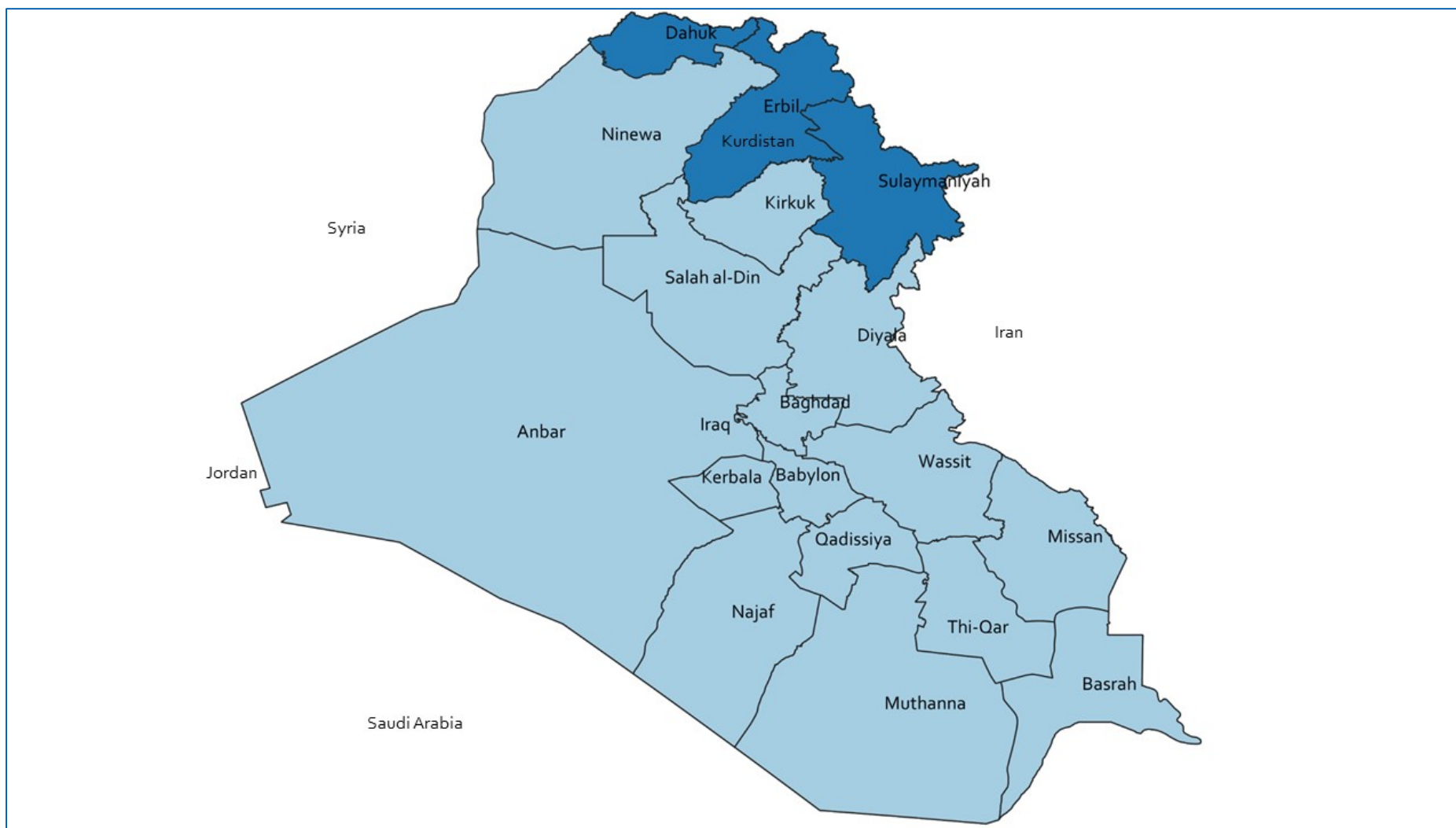
Executive Summary

Project Background

Between 2014 and 2018, the ILO implemented the "Support the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to Develop an Action Plan for the Implementation of the Employment Policy" project for which the main objective was to increase access to productive employment, decent work, and income opportunities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). More specifically, the objectives of the project included improving the capacity of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) for employment policy implementation, including monitoring and evaluation; ensuring the development of an Action Plan (AP) for the implementation of the National Employment Policy (NEP) with priority settings endorsed by all stakeholders; and implementing priority areas for work within this AP. To achieve these objectives, the ILO has assisted in drafting the AP, setting priorities, and conducting a number of capacity building activities.

As a result of the project, a high-level committee for employment was established as well as an Employment Policy Unit (EPU) supported by focal points representing tripartite partners. A translated version of the AP was submitted to the KRG in March 2017, including a list of 11 priority interventions. An addendum to the AP and a roadmap for the development of Public Employment Services (PES) were presented in 2018 during a workshop in Amman. The AP included (monitoring) systems and mechanisms that would support the implementation of the Kurdistan Employment Policy (KEP), but during project implementation it had been decided to prioritise other activities over the development of a framework for a skills development strategy.

Evaluation Background

Forcier Consulting was contracted to evaluate the ILO support to the KRG for the implementation of the KEP. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess major outcomes and constraints of the project, identify lessons learned and emerging good practices, and formulate recommendations for the implementation of similar projects in the future. The evaluation was conducted at the end of June 2018 in Beirut and Erbil, and adhered to ILO's evaluation policies.

Evaluation Methodology

The evaluation framework considered the following predetermined evaluation criteria: relevance and strategic fit, validity of design, efficiency, effectiveness, impact orientation, the effectiveness of management arrangements, and sustainability. For the evaluation, Forcier conducted a thorough desk review of secondary literature and project documents provided by the ILO. In addition, 16 semi-structured interviews (SSIs) were conducted with relevant stakeholders as well as ILO project staff and consultants.

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Findings

ILO's intervention was found to be highly relevant to the needs of the labour market in the KRI and its strategy closely fit the KRG's vision for the region. The project, however, could have been more flexible in adapting to the changing context in the KRI during its implementation. While the project design remained relevant, changes in the needs of the KRI put the implementation of the designed strategies and roadmaps at risk. In addition, the design of the project did not fully align with the financial capacities of the KRG and technical capacities of the key KRG staff responsible for policy implementation. Essential information regarding these aspects could have been obtained through a needs and capacity assessment prior to project design.

While the project design largely remained valid throughout the project's lifetime, some assumptions at the design stage were unrealistic. The timeframes set for certain project activities, such as the recruitment of the CTA, were unrealistic and some language barriers had not been taken into account. Delays caused by staffing subsequently led to some budgetary limitations with regard to staffing towards the end of the project. In addition, the overestimation of the KRG's and KRG staffs' technical and financial capacities led to project activities not providing the KRG with the practical support needed and designed strategies and roadmaps requiring budgets for implementation that the KRG cannot afford. These delays and mismatches could have been prevented if a monitoring system had clearly been defined and implemented to assess the progress of capacity building of the KRG and the timely achievement of project activities.

The efficiency of implementation of the project was limited by a number of factors; considerable delays in implementation of project activities were caused by the lengthy recruitment process of the CTA, staff turnover and issues related to communication barriers. These delays resulted in suboptimal utilisation of project funds despite efforts to prioritise efficiency and could have been prevented with the rigorous progress monitoring system. Project activities organised outside of the KRI as requested by the KRG also increased project costs and limited access of women to attend these activities, while not significantly contributing to the project's outcomes.

In terms of the effectiveness of management arrangements, the relationship between stakeholders was found to be positive and only limited management issues occurred. Some differences in expectations existed between ILO and the tripartite partners over who would take the lead over certain project activities. The most important reason for this was that no permanent ILO staff was based in Erbil tasked with safeguarding the project's progress, and consequently compromised communication lines between ILO and project stakeholders. Gender equality, however, was clearly reflected in the project activities and included as one of the priorities in the AP.

The project was effective in achieving nearly all of the planned objectives set prior to implementation. While no separate document had been created for the establishment of (monitoring) systems and mechanisms for the implementation of the KEP, these aspects were thoroughly considered and included in the AP for the implementation of the KEP and should, therefore, be considered as successful. The drafting of a framework for skills development was the only objective that had not been achieved. During implementation of the project and due to changing priorities of the KRG in light of the changing context of the pushback of ISIS, it was decided to no longer include this objective in the project design.

The **impact** of the project is limited to policies, structures and bodies having been established for the implementation of the KEP. Though, staffs still lack practical skills for the development of a framework for skills development and the KRG does not currently possess the budget required for

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the full implementation of the KEP and the roadmap for the development of PES. For this reason, capacity building of the KRG should remain a priority and continuation of support is recommended.

At the time of conducting this evaluation, project outcomes and impact are not likely to sustain, because of the remaining capacity gaps and financial constraints of the KRG. Continued training and practical guidance, support with budget allocation and support with establishing closer cooperation of the Government of Iraq is needed to safeguard the project outcomes and impact. If this additional support is indeed offered, sustainability of the project would invariably increase as the action plan and the KEP enjoy widespread support of all tripartite partners as a result of the inclusive approach of the project.

Conclusions

Overall, the project was successful in achieving the majority of its objectives. The most important barriers to achieve better results stemmed from irregular communication between ILO and project beneficiaries, and mismatches between the project design and needs and capacities of the beneficiaries. These barriers resulted in considerable project delays and limited the project's impact with regard to the capacity of relevant bodies to implement the KEP independently after the conclusion of the project. To safeguard the project's impact achieved so far and to achieve all planned project outcomes, the provision of continued support is not only justifiable but also recommended. In addition, continued support is most likely to be successful within a broader framework of support not only to the KRG, but also to and with cooperation of the Government of Iraq.

Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices

In addition to the conclusions and recommendations above, this evaluation identified the following lessons learned and emerging food practices:

- **Lesson learned 1**: Permanent presence of ILO staff at the project location, in combination with regular communication and inter-stakeholder updates, and rigorous progress monitoring processes can prevent miscommunications, conflicting expectations and delays in the project and allow for timely response to issues that may occur;
- **Lesson learned 2**: While recruitment at local level of expert staff may be preferred, this does create a high risk for considerable operational challenges and project delays. Recruitment of temporary international staff (based on location) tasked with implementing the first phase of the project and the recruitment of permanent local replacements can mitigate these risks;
- **Lesson learned 3**: Conducting a needs and capacity assessment before designing the project will allow for project activities to be closely tailored to the needs and capacities of institutions allowing for increased efficiency, effectiveness and impact;
- **Emerging good practice 1**: The participatory approach of involving as many as 18 ministries and other relevant bodies in the project fostered wide support for the AP and KEP; and
- **Emerging good practice 2**: At institutional and policy level, the project design allowed for building on existing structures which resulted in a relatively simple and widely accepted framework for the implementation of the KEP.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this evaluation, the following recommendations are proposed:

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Table 1. Recommendations

	Recommendations	Responsible Stakeholder	Priority	Resources
1.	Continue support for the KRG in rolling out the action plan for implementation of the KEP	ILO ROAS staffs involved in resource allocation and in drafting regional programmes, and relevant tripartite partners	High	Substantial human or financial resources
2.	Assist the KRG in setting-up a monitoring system for employment	ILO ROAS staffs involved in drafting regional programmes and relevant tripartite partners	Medium	Substantial human or financial resources
3.	Conduct a thorough needs and capacity assessments of key stakeholders involved in policy implementation and monitoring	ILO ROAS staffs involved in programme design and project implementation	Medium	Moderate human and financial resources
4.	Improve progress monitoring and communication with key stakeholders of the project	ILO ROAS staffs involved in programme design and project implementation	Medium	Dependent on the type of staff recruited for this purpose
5.	Optimise recruitment processes for key project staff	ILO staffs involved in the design of employment policy programmes	Medium	Little human or financial resources
6.	Continued programme support should be implemented in a broader context targeting Iraq as a whole	Donors, ILO staffs involved in the design of employment policy programmes	Medium	Substantial human or financial resources

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Key Findings

Table 2. Key Findings

Evaluation Criteria	Key Findings
Relevance and Strategic Fit	▪ The 11 emergency interventions align with the KRG's own vision but need to be flexible to the ever-changing situation in the KRI. ▪ While project design remained relevant, changes in the needs of the KRI have placed considerable strain on plans for future implementation ▪ The design of the project did not adequately align with the capacities of its beneficiaries because, at the design stage, essential information was missing that could have been obtained through a needs and capacity assessment
Validity of Design	▪ Some assumptions during the design phase were unrealistic: the timeframes set for certain project activities (such as the recruitment of the CTA) were unrealistic, and the design did not take language considerations into account ▪ Because misconceptions about the capacities of the tripartite partners, differences in expectations existed concerning the level of responsibilities the partners could take on ▪ Mechanisms for project progress monitoring were not clearly defined or implemented, and therefore did not allow for early detection of issues during implementation
Efficiency	▪ The project suffered from considerable delays in implementation, caused by the delays in the recruitment of the CTA, staff turnover and issues related to communication barriers ▪ Project delays resulted in suboptimal utilization of project funds despite efforts to prioritize efficiency ▪ Organising project activities outside of the KRI increased project costs, but did not achieve a considerable contribution to the project's outcomes
Effectiveness of Management Arrangements	▪ Overall, the relationships between stakeholders was positive and limited management issues occurred ▪ Differences in expectations existed between ILO and the tripartite partners over who would take lead over certain project activities
Effectiveness	▪ The project managed to meet most of the planned outcomes with the exception of the drafting of a framework for skills development and establishment of (monitoring) systems and mechanisms for the implementation of the KEP ▪ Most project activities focused on gender equality and women empowerment was successfully included as one of the priority interventions
Impact	▪ While the project supported the KRI at institutional and policy level to prepare for the implementation of the KEP, limited practical guidance was offered ▪ As a result, the capacity of tripartite partners should remain a priority for any future cooperation ▪ Continuation of support of ILO to the KRG was found to be justifiable
Sustainability	▪ In the current situation, project outcomes and impact are uncertain to be sustained because of likely capacity gaps and financial constraints of the KRG ▪ Additional support with regard to practical guidance and capacity building, establishing monitoring systems and developing a framework for skills development is needed to safeguard the project outcomes and impact

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1. Background

1.1 Context

The Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) is an autonomous region located in northern Iraq with its own government (the Kurdistan Regional Government or KRG), parliament (the Kurdistan Parliament), judicial powers and security forces (Peshmerga forces).[1] The KRI comprises the three north-eastern states of Iraq: Dohuk, Erbil and Sulaymaniyah.[2] The majority of the 5.8 million people living in the KRI are Kurdish with most practicing Islam or Christianity. Muslims most often practice Sunnism with a sizable minority of Sufis and Christians usually are Syrian Catholic, Syrian Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Catholic Chaldean, and Yazidi or belong to the Assyrian Church of the East.

The modern KRG was formed in 1992 and is hosted in the KRI's capital, Erbil. In 2005, the KRG was officially recognized under the Iraqi Constitution. A year later, in 2006, the administration of Erbil was merged with the administration of Sulaymaniyah. Since the most recent elections in 2013, the three main parties in the Kurdish Parliament are the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) with 38 seats, Gorran with 24 seats and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) with 18 seats. The KRG has strongly committed itself to improving freedom, health, overall welfare and economic security for its people.[3]

The economy of the KRI is characterised by a large industrial sector that heavily relies on the oil industry. The public sector and the agricultural sector are the two most important sectors in terms of employment. Despite the tremendous efforts of the KRG to stimulate its economy, the KRI is facing severe economic challenges caused by four main factors.[4] First, the economy heavily relies on its oil revenues, which make up nearly 85% of the KRGs fiscal revenue. This has been highly problematic given recent volatility in oil prices and disputes over the allocation of oil revenue. The oil industry also strengthens the position of the Iraqi dinar and subsequently weakens the economic and competitive position of the KRI resulting in increased unemployment rates.

Figure 2. GDP in Iraq 2010 - 2017 in USD (in Billions) by Year[5]
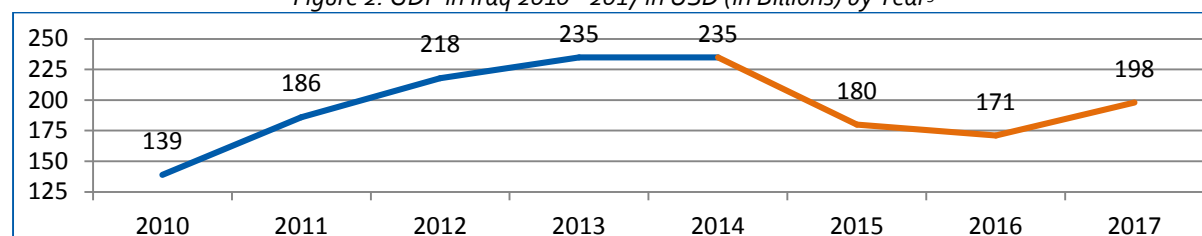
Second, the economy strongly relies on import, because of the homogeneous character of the KRI's economy. This weakens the competitive position of local small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

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[1] 'Briefing Regional Implications of Iraqi Kurdistan's Quest for Independence', 2016.
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2016/595836/EPRS_BRI%282016%29595836_EN.pdf> [accessed 2 July 2018].
[2] Feike Fliervoet, 'Fighting for Kurdistan? Assessing the Nature and Functions of the Peshmerga in Iraq', 2018.
<https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/fighting-for-kurdistan.pdf> [accessed 2 July 2018].
[3] Kurdistan Regional Government, 'Kurdistan Region of Iraq 2020 A Vision for the Future', 2013.
[4] The World Bank, 'The Kurdistan Region of Iraq - Reforming the Economy for Shared Prosperity and Protecting the Vulnerable', 2016, 1–219 <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/672671468196766598/pdf/106132-v2-main-report-P159972-PUBLIC-KRG-Economic-Reform-Roadmap-post-Decision-Review-05-30-16.pdf> [accessed 7 June 2018].
[5] World Bank Metadata.

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within the KRI and limits the opportunities for economic growth. Thirdly, a significant share of the KRI's population is employed in the public sector (53% in 2014). As a result, the KRG spends 58%[6] of the region's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on wages, while limiting the collectable tax revenues on employment.[7] Lastly, the KRI has a largely cash-based economy due to mistrust towards bankers. This strongly discourages national and international investments in the region.

In addition, recent events have caused some major shocks to Iraq's (and the KRI's) economy (as can be seen in the figure above). The on-going conflict in Syria and the advancement (and subsequent pushback) of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in 2014 resulted in an influx of refugees and rising numbers of internally displaced persons (IDP) putting pressure on the economy and public services. Moreover, the 2015 drop in oil prices painfully demonstrated the unfavourable dependency on the oil industry of the KRI's economy.[8] The successful pushback of ISIS by the Peshmerga forces and insufficient support of Iraqi security forces strengthened the KRI's argument for independence The successes against ISIS, however, caused some additional regional instability in 2017 as they inspired the Kurdish independence referendum during which 92% voted in favour of independence.[9][10]

Figure 3. Participation Rate in the Labour Force in Iraq in 2017 (in %) by Gender[11]
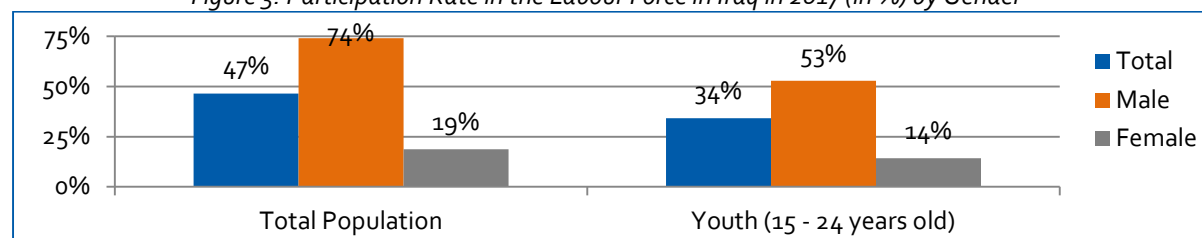
Figure 4. Unemployment Rates in Iraq in 2017 (in %) by Gender[12]
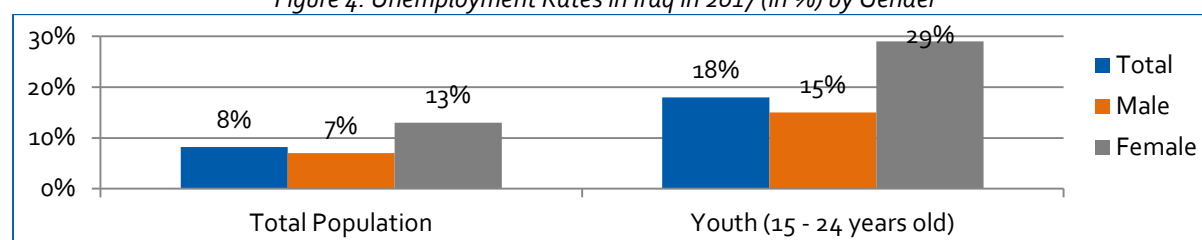
The character of the Kurdish economy and the shocks it recently experienced are strongly related to low rates of participation in the labour force and high unemployment rates in the past years (see the figures above for general Iraq data). As they are in Iraq, youth participation rates and unemployment rates are considerably worse than those of the rest of the population. In addition, gender discrepancies are large, as men are far more likely to participate in the labour force and far less likely

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Government.

[8] Athanasios Manis, *Averting an Economic Meltdown in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq Aligning Political Objectives with Economic Necessities*, 2016 < www.meri-k.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Averting-an-Economic-Meltdown-in-the-Kurdistan-Region-of-Iraq-Aligning-Political-Objectives-with-Economic-Necessities.pdf> [accessed 2 July 2018].

[9] Fliervoet.

[10] BBC World, *Iraqi Kurds decisively back independence in referendum*, 27 September 2017 <www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-41419633> [accessed 17 July 2018].

[11] World Bank Metadata: modeled ILO estimates (percentage of the total population aged 15 years or older).

[12] World Bank Metadata: modeled ILO estimates (percentage of the total work force aged 15 years or older).

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to be unemployed than women. In 2017, no indicators for improvement could be detected in these trends, because the discrepancies were even larger for youth than for the total population.

The KRG and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) intend to diversify the KRI's economy by encouraging private sector investments (for example in tourism) and focusing on SMEs.[13] This way, the KRG hopes to reduce unemployment rates and improve overall welfare in the KRI. In 2009, the KRG implemented large-scale educational reforms to increase access to education by establishing schools and improving the quality of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in support of further reduction of unemployment. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has supported the KRG in improving its economy and creating employment opportunities by assisting the MoLSA in developing the Kurdistan Employment Policy (KEP).[14]

1.2 Project Description

ILO's project "Support the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to Develop an Action plan for the Implementation of the Employment Policy", or briefly "the project" aimed to increase access to productive employment, decent work and income opportunities in the KRI. The project was funded by the KRG at a total cost of 685,000 USD, of which 505,000 USD was paid to the ILO and 180,000 USD was transferred to the MoLSA.[15] Implementation was conducted jointly by the ILO and the MoLSA. Other stakeholders included the Ministry of Planning, the Ministry of Culture and Youth, the Ministry of Education and workers' and employers' organisations in the KRI.

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[13] Government.

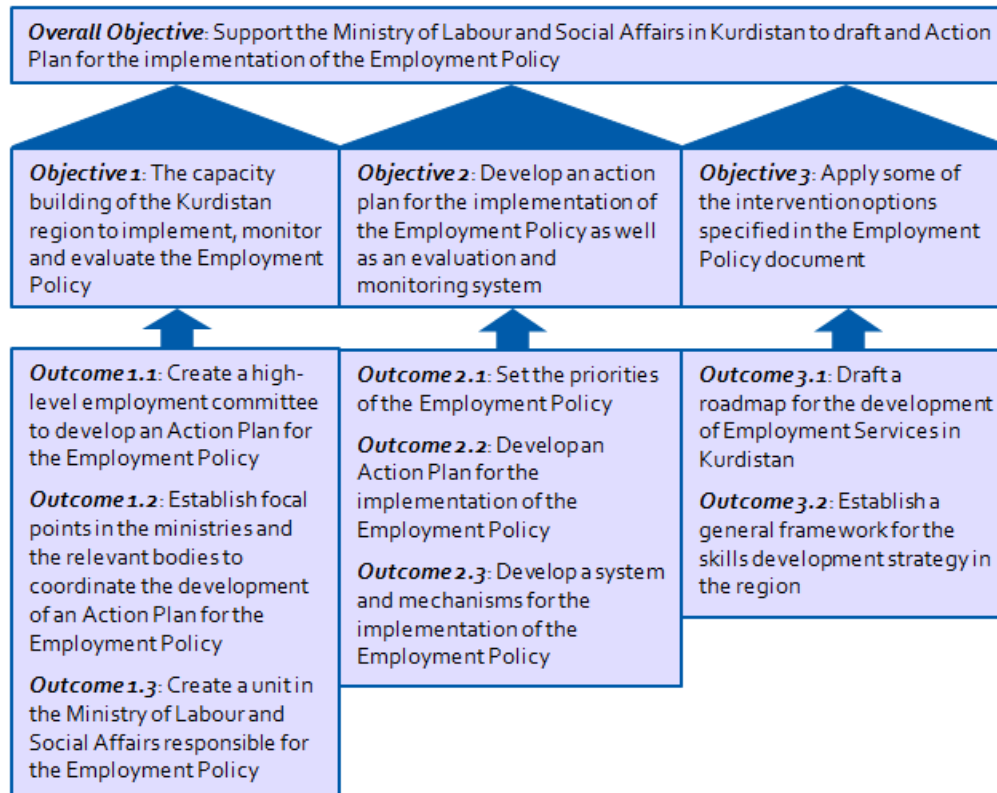[14] International Labour Organization, 'Terms of Reference' (International Labour Organization, 2018).

[15] Ghassan Al Saffar, *Final Report on the Drafting of an Action Plan for the Implementation of the EP in Kurdistan.Pdf* (Iraq: International Labour Organization, 2016).

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Figure 5. Project Logical Framework

Overall Objective: Support the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to draft and Action Plan for the implementation of the Employment Policy

Objective 1: The capacity building of the Kurdistan region to implement, monitor and evaluate the Employment Policy

Objective 2: Develop an action plan for the implementation of the Employment Policy as well as an evaluation and monitoring system

Objective 3: Apply some of the intervention options specified in the Employment Policy document

Outcome 1.1: Create a high-level employment committee to develop an Action Plan for the Employment Policy

Outcome 1.2: Establish focal points in the ministries and the relevant bodies to coordinate the development of an Action Plan for the Employment Policy

Outcome 1.3: Create a unit in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs responsible for the Employment Policy

Outcome 2.1: Set the priorities of the Employment Policy

Outcome 2.2: Develop an Action Plan for the implementation of the Employment Policy

Outcome 2.3: Develop a system and mechanisms for the implementation of the Employment Policy

Outcome 3.1: Draft a roadmap for the development of Employment Services in Kurdistan

Outcome 3.2: Establish a general framework for the skills development strategy in the region

In 2012, the MoLSA, with the support of ILO, drafted the KEP, which was subsequently approved by the KRG.[16] After this, ILO supported the KRG with the implementation of the KEP by (1) improving the KRG's capacity for employment policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation; (2) developing an Action Plan (AP), endorsed by all stakeholders, for the implementation of the National Employment Policy (NEP) with priority setting; and, (3) implementing priority areas for work within the AP. The project structure including planned outputs is included in the figure above. While the project was intended to only last one year, multiple extensions brought the total duration to five years.

The actual implementation of the project started in April 2015, when a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) and an advisor to MoLSA were hired. Under the supervision of the CTA a high-level employment committee (briefly "committee") was appointed representing 14 ministries as well as workers' and employers' organisations. The committee was tasked with developing the AP for the implementation of the KEP. In addition, 18 focal points were appointed to assist the committee in drafting the AP and identifying priority areas or emergency interventions (see the figure below). These focal points represented different relevant ministries as well as other government and non-governmental bodies. An Employment Policy Unit was also set of to follow up on the project and safeguard its implementation.[17]

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[16] Mary Kawar and Ghassan Al Saffar, *Mission Report Mary Kawar 25-28 March 2013* (Erbil, Kurdistan, 2013).
[17] 'KRG AP Project- Achivements and Timeline'.

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Figure 6. Priority Interventions Defined in the Action Plan

Action Plan

11 Priority Interventions

1. Steering public investment towards job creation

2. Linking commerce and foreign and local direct and indirect investments to labour markets in the KRG

3. Developing the legislative and legal frameworks for the agricultural sector

4. Financing (Agriculture)

5. Providing incentives for the establishment of business enterprises in areas with high rates of unemployment and poverty

6. Providing adequate support to make the establishment of project a vocational option, especially for young people

7. Ensuring the private sector's commitment to respect workers' rights and to develop codes to conduct reflecting the socially responsible behavior standards

8. Giving priority to women empowerment and gender equality

9. Guaranteeing the existence of efficient links between the policy level and the implementation level

10. A national strategy for training and vocational education

11. Developing a comprehensive labour market data programme through databases

Moreover, a roadmap was drafted for the development and revitalisation of KRI's Public Employment Services (PES) under supervision of the CTA. In May 2016, this CTA was replaced by another consultant to complete the project. The consultant completed the development of the AP that was submitted to the KRG in February 2017 and a translation in March 2017. In line with MoLSA's priorities, a workshop was conducted in Amman in March 2018 for the presentation of the AP and capacity building of the focal points and EPU on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the KEP. At this workshop, the roadmap for revitalising the PES was also presented. The roadmap and an addendum to the AP were submitted to the MoLSA in June 2018.

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2. Evaluation Methodology

2.1 Purpose of the Evaluation

This final internal evaluation assessed the outcomes of the "Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to Develop an Action Plan for the Implementation of the Employment Policy" project. The study covers the entire project implementation period and was designed to assess the major outcomes and constraints of the project, identify lessons learned and emerging best practices, and formulate recommendations for the implementation of similar projects in the future. The evaluation pays specific attention to gender equality and tripartite involvement.

The evaluation complies with the ILO evaluation policies that are based on the United Nations (UN) Evaluation Norms and Standards and the UN Evaluation Guide (UNEG) ethical guidelines. Evaluation criteria used to conduct this evaluation are specified in the Terms of Reference (TOR) and Inception Report that are included in Annex 7 and Annex 8 of this report. They followed ILO's standard framework and its evaluation criteria, including: relevance and strategic fit to the KRI's regional context and the KRG's priorities and needs; validity of the project's design in targeting existing problems and needs; efficiency of the use of human and material resources to achieve the project's objectives; effectiveness of the project in terms of achieving its objectives; anticipated and unanticipated impact of the project on its stakeholders; the effectiveness of management arrangements; and the sustainability of the results of the project.

This study seeks to inform ILO staff who were involved in the design and implementation of the project; the KRG as sole donor and beneficiary; other stakeholders and tripartite partners, such as the Trade Union, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the advisor to MoLSA and the EPU; and other ILO staff that may be involved in implementing similar projects in the future. Data for this study was collected in Beirut, Lebanon, and Erbil, KRI, in June and July 2018 in close coordination with the ILO Regional Office of the Arab States (ROAS) as key client of this study.

2.1.1 Specific Evaluation Criteria

Relevance and strategic fit – the extent to which the objectives are aligned with sub-regional, national and local priorities and needs, the constituents' priorities and needs, and the donor's priorities for the country:
- How well does the project's approach fit context of the on-going crisis in Iraq? To what extent does the project fit into national development and humanitarian response plans?
- How do the project objectives respond to the priorities of the donor?
- Are the project objectives aligned with tripartite constituents' objectives and needs? What measures were taken to ensure alignment? How does the project deal with shortcomings of tripartism characteristic of the region?
- To what extent are project activities linked to the global commitments of the ILO including the Sustainable Development Goals and the agenda 2030?
- Are the planned project objectives and outcomes relevant and realistic to the situation and needs on the ground? Were the problems and needs adequately analysed?

Validity of design – the extent to which the project design, logic, strategy and elements are/remain valid vis-à-vis problems and needs:

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- Is the project strategy and structure coherent and logical (what are logical correlations between the development objective, module outcomes, and outputs)? Do any changes need to be made to the design of the project?
- On the whole, were project assumptions realistic, were targets realistic, and did the project undergo a risk analysis and design readjustment when necessary?
- Does the project make use of a monitoring and evaluation framework? How appropriate and useful are the indicators in assessing the project's progress? If necessary, how should they be modified to be more useful? Are indicators gender sensitive? Are the means of verification for the indicators appropriate? Are the assumptions for each module objective and output realistic?
- To what extent were the indicators used effective in measuring an increase in self-reliance and an enhancement of social cohesion and the improved capacities of the involved institutions? To what extent were the indicators used effective in measuring enhancement of capacities of ILO constituents?
- What was the baseline condition at the beginning of the project? How was it established?
- Was the strategy for sustainability of impact defined clearly at the design stage of the project? If yes, how? Was the approach taken appropriate to the context?

Efficiency - the productivity of the project implementation process taken as a measure of the extent to which the outputs achieved are derived from an efficient use of financial, material and human resources:
- To what extent have project activities been cost-effective? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- To what extent has the project been able to build on other ILO or non-ILO initiatives either nationally or regionally, in particular with regard to the creation of synergies in cost sharing?
- What were the intervention benefits and related costs of integrating gender equality?
- How could the efficiency of the project be improved?

Effectiveness - the extent to which the project can be said to have contributed to the development objective and the module objectives and more concretely whether the stated outputs have been produced satisfactorily; in addition to building synergies with national initiatives and with other donor-supported projects:
- What progress has the project made so far towards achieving the development objective and module outcomes? In cases where challenges have been faced, what intermediate results can be reported towards reaching the outcomes?
- How have stakeholders been involved in project implementation? To what extent has the project management been participatory and has the participation contributed towards achievement of the project objectives?
- How did outputs and outcomes contribute to ILO's mainstreamed strategies including gender equality, social dialogue, poverty reduction and labour standards?
- To what extent did synergies with and operation through government entities and local organisations help to ensure the sustainability of the impact of the project?
- What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving its objectives?
- What positive or negative unintended outcomes can be identified?

Impact - positive and negative changes and effects caused by the project at the sub regional and national levels, i.e. the impact with social partners, government entities, beneficiaries, etc.:
- What is the likely contribution of the project initiatives to the stated module objectives of the intervention?

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- To what extent are national partners able and willing to continue with the project? How effectively has the project built national ownership?
- At this stage, would considering a continuation of the project to consolidate achievements be justifiable? In what way should the next phase differ from the current one?

Effectiveness of management arrangement:
- What was the division of work tasks within the project team? Has the use of local skills been effective? How does the project governance structure facilitate good results and efficient delivery?
- How clear is the understanding of roles and responsibilities and division of labour between project staff and government entities?
- How effective was communication between the project team, the regional office and the responsible technical department at headquarters? Has the project received adequate technical and administrative support/response from the ILO backstopping units?
- How effectively does the project management monitor project performance and results? Does the project report on progress in a regular and systematic manner, both at regional level, to PROGRAM and the donors? What M&E system has been put in place, and how effective has it been?

Sustainability – the extent to which adequate capacity building of social partners has taken place to ensure mechanisms are in place to sustain activities and whether the existing results are likely to be maintained beyond project completion; the extent to which the knowledge developed throughout the project (research papers, progress reports, manuals and other tools) can still be utilised after the end of the project to inform policies and practitioners:
- Are the results achieved by the project so far likely to be sustainable? What measures have been considered to ensure that the key components of the project are sustainable beyond the life of the project?
- To what extent was sustainability of impact taken into account during the design of the project?

Challenges, Lessons learned and Specific Recommendations for the formulation of Phase III:
- What good practices can be learned from the project that can be applied to future phases of this project or similar future projects?
- If it were possible, what could have been implemented differently for greater relevance, sustainability, efficiency, effectiveness and impact?

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Research Approach
To address the above mentioned research questions and evaluation criteria, Forcier carried out an initial desk review followed by a total of 16 Semi-Structured Interviews (SSI) with key stakeholders of the project. The desk review of project documents and relevant secondary literature was conducted to create a better understanding of the project's context. SSIs are especially useful for process

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evaluations and understanding underlying reasons for these processes.[18,19] Therefore, the SSIs were designed to elicit crucial information about the project, relevant to each of the different evaluation criteria.

The interview guides were drafted in accordance with ILO's EVAL Checklist 4 and based on information derived from the desk review. The guides addressed all relevant research questions and evaluation criteria. Data collection was an emergent process, meaning that the researcher adapted the interview guides during the period of data collection to accommodate themes emerging during interviews.[20]

Table 3. Respondents with Corresponding Evaluation Criteria

Semi-Structured Interview Respondents	Relevance and Strategic Fit	Validity of Design	Efficiency	Effectiveness	Impact	Management Arrangements	Sustainability
ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist			x	x	x	x	x
ILO Programme Officer			x	x	x	x	x
ILO Research Economist			x	x	x	x	x
ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist			x	x	x	x	x
ILO Chief Regional Programming Services	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Advisor to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Director General of Labour, Social Insurance and TVET (MoLSA)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Employment Policy Unit Member		x	x	x		x	x
Director of the Operating Department (MoLSA)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Representative of the Trade Union of the KRI		x		x	x		x
Advisor of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry		x		x	x		x
Representative of the Ministry of Agriculture	x		x	x	x		
Representative of the Ministry of Municipality and Tourism	x		x	x	x		
Representative of the Investment Authority		x		x	x		x
Representative of the Ministry of Higher Education	x		x	x	x		

2.2.1 Data Collection
A local Field Researcher (FR), familiar with both Kurdish and Arabic languages, was assigned to conduct SSIs after receiving training by the Lead Researcher (LR). This training familiarized the FR with the background and rationale of the evaluation, with the interview guides, research ethics and

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[18] Susan Purdon and others, 'Department for Work and Pensions: Research Working Paper No 2', *Research Methods for Policy Evaluation*, 2001 <http://www.thesummerinstitute.ca/wp-content/uploads/Research-Methods-for-Policy-Evaluation.pdf> [accessed 20 June 2018].
[19] Loïc Wacquant, 'Ethnografeast: A Progress Report on the Practice and Promise of Ethnography', *Ethnography*, 4.1 (2003), 5–14 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138103004001001>.
[20] A Glaser, B;, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Chicago, 1967).

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sampling methodology. During this training, all questions in the interview guides were extensively reviewed and discussed to ensure full familiarity of the FR with their meaning and purpose.

SSI respondents were selected using purposeful sampling to effectively obtain the required information.[21] SSIs were conducted with relevant stakeholders mentioned in the table above, including the local tripartite partners. All interviews were audio recorded with the consent of the interviewee, and field notes were taken during all interviews and expanded upon as soon as possible after completion of the interviews. After each day of data collection, a field debrief was conducted with the FR and the LR, during which the main themes of the interviews were discussed, including newly emerged themes and findings that required follow-up. Where necessary, interview-guides were adapted based on these debriefs. [22]

Interviews lasted between 45 – 90 minutes, made use of emergent designs, and field notes were expanded. In addition, debriefs allowed for interview guides to be adapted were appropriate. Data was analysed using a deductive approach with two rounds of coding. Coding was conducted making use of the framework method, deriving the predetermined codes from the ILO evaluation framework. Upon completion of data analysis, researchers discussed their findings to reach agreement on the results and conclusions.

Upon completion of data collection, the LR conducted a debrief meeting with staff of the ILO ROAS in Beirut. During this debrief, the LR presented the most relevant preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations, and received additional feedback from ILO ROAS staff on the validity of these findings and conclusions.

2.2.3 Data Analysis
Data was analysed using a deductive approach using predetermined themes and categories.[23] More specifically, data was analysed using the framework analysis method.[24,25] This method is widely used in applied policy research and is especially useful in an environment of constrained time and resources. For this method researchers first familiarised themselves with the data by listening to the interviews at least once and reading back field notes. After this, data was analysed using predetermined codes and categories in accordance with the evaluation criteria specified by ILO. Coding was conducted in two rounds: first, codes were assigned on a less interpretative manner; after this, coding was more in-depth and based on deeper meaning of the text and scripts.

The analysis, moreover, was an iterative process; researchers went back and forth between the interviews to detect emerging themes.[26] Data of each of the interviews was also triangulated to increase the credibility of results emerging from the analysis. The two researchers involved in data analysis discussed discrepancies in their findings and reached agreement on themes and conclusions.

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[21] David E. Gray, *Doing Research in the Real World* (London: Sage, 2009).

[22] E Glaser, BG; Strauss, AL; Strutzel, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (Chicago: Aldine Chicago, 1968).

[23] Gray.

[24] Christine Furber, 'Framework Analysis: A Method for Analysing Qualitative Data', *African Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health*, 4.2 (2010), 97–100 <https://doi.org/10.12968/ajmw.2010.4.2.47612>.

[25] Jane Ritchie and Liz Spencer, 'Qualitative Data Analysis for Applied Policy Research', *The Qualitative Research Companion*, 2002, 305–29 <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9781134927548/chapters/10.4324%2F9780203413081-14> [accessed 20 June 2018].

[26] S Berkowitz, *User-Friendly Handbook for Mixed Method Evaluations* (Arlington: Division of Research, Evaluation and Communication, National Science Foundation, 1997).

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2.2.4 Ethical Considerations

The evaluation was conducted in compliance with the UNEG ethical guidelines and the United Nations Evaluation Norms and Standards.[27][28] Therefore, all respondents of the SSIs were fully informed of their rights, including:

- The respondents' consent to take part in the data collection is completely voluntarily and refusing to take part in the interview will have no negative consequences;
- The respondent has the right to end the interview at any point with no reason given;
- The respondent has the right to refuse to answer any question they feel uncomfortable with; and
- All the information given by the respondent will be kept confidential so that their responses and identity cannot be linked together.

2.2.5 Methodological Limitations

There were some methodological limitations for this evaluation. Firstly, the scope of this study did not include quantitative data collection and only allowed for conducting a member check with ILO staff members. Because of this, the findings of this report could not be validated by other respondents of the study or by project beneficiaries. As a result, certain views may not have been captured or fully captured during this evaluation.

Secondly, a deductive approach was adopted during the analysis of interviews due to time constraints. By adopting a deductive instead of an inductive approach, one analyses data using predetermined codes instead of codes that emerge from the data. By applying evaluation criteria as set by the ILO, the impact of this approach on the reliability of outcomes should be reduced.

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[27] UNEG, 'UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation', 2008, 14.
<http://www.uneval.org/documentdownload?doc_id=102&file_id=548>.
[28] UNEG, 'Norms and Standards for Evaluation', 2016, 30.

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3. Main Findings

This chapter provides an overview of the project's performance against each of the evaluation parameters. The first section, "Relevance and Appropriateness" includes the main findings with regard to both relevance and strategic fit of the project with regards to the needs and priorities of the KRG, and validity of project design in the project's changeable context. The second section combines the evaluation of efficiency of the project's implementation in making optimal use of material, financial and human resources, and effectiveness of management arrangements during the implementation phase. The last three sections discuss the effectiveness of the project in achieving the planned results; impact of the project's results and possible unanticipated impact; and the sustainability of the project's achievements.

3.1 Relevance and Appropriateness

3.1.1 Strategic Fit

Generally, the project objectives aligned with some of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) that the ILO is committed to. The interventions most closely related to the eighth SDG of providing decent work and economic growth, but also to the seventeenth SDG of establishing efficient links between policy levels and implementing levels as well as providing support for starting businesses. In addition, ILO's intervention was in line with the SDGs on gender equality as it prioritised women empowerment and creating employment opportunities for women. Lastly, the project included activities to establish and safeguard social protection systems, and legislation to ensure safe working environments and employment protection.[29]

Moreover, the 11 emergency interventions identified in the AP are in close line with the needs for of the KRI's economy. Sometime after the start of the project, the World Bank formulated priorities for improving the KRI's economy. These focussed on diversifying the economy and accommodating the challenges the KRI was facing following the recent crises. The emergency interventions specified by ILO closely matched these priorities, evidencing the close strategic fit of the project with the region's needs.[30]

In 2013, the KRG also drafted their own document detailing their vision for the future of the KRI, including their views for the labour market.[31] The priorities for the KRI identified by the KRG only partially overlap with the 11 priorities identified in the AP for reducing unemployment.[32] The AP and the KRG both prioritise investments in education and training to decrease the gap between the available skills of the labour force and skills demanded by the labour market, and in gender equality in employment. The KRG, in addition, identified pension reforms, the introduction of an unemployment insurance system and other legal reforms that the 11 emergency interventions in the AP did not include. In part, this may be explained by the fact that the current government expenditure would only allow for such reforms after economic diversification and increased employment in the private sector.

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[29] 'SDG Targets and Related Thematic Areas' <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/dw4sd/theme-by-sdg-targets/WCMS_558153/lang--en/index.htm> [accessed 9 July 2018].
[30] The World Bank.
[31] Government.
[32] ILO; Kurdistan Regional Government, 'Action Plan for the Employment Policy of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq', 2016.

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In 2012, when the project was planned to start, the situation in the KRI was relatively stable. The unemployment rates in the region were low and the KRI's economy was in need of a long-term vision. This changed when, in 2014, ISIS gained territory in the KRI, the KRG received less financial support from the Iraqi Federal Government, oil revenues faced a major drop and the KRI experiences a large influx of refugees (from Syria) and IDPs. Indeed, the situation in the KRI has been subject to large changes in security, economy and population structure during the project lifetime. This automatically impacted the fit of the project with the changing needs of the beneficiaries.[33]

Due to this changing situation, the KRI's economy's need for short-term interventions increased in addition to the more long-term KEP. While some of these short-term interventions fell outside of the scope of this project because of their humanitarian nature, other changes could have been incorporated in the project by adjusting its scope to the new situation. One of the EPU members interviewed for this evaluation reported that, given the changed economic situation, the KRI would benefit more from additional targeted interventions focussing on SMEs, rather than large-scale reforms such as the proposed KEP. The ILO, however, reduced the number of priorities under the AP from 82 to 33 (and later consolidated into the final 11) as a result of continued project additions exacerbated by the changing political economic situation in the KRI and a decrease in available resources of the KRG.

ILO staff agreed that during the planning of the project needs for capacity building were assessed to be much lower than they in reality were.[34] As a result of the decrease of available financial and human resources of the KRG, the need for capacity building only increased. Subsequently, the existing capacity did not meet the basic requirements for implementing the different components of the project, such as drafting the AP, drafting the roadmap for implementation, or for the prioritisation of interventions. Therefore, it is not surprising that the planned ILO support was perceived to be insufficient by some members of the KRG.[35]

While it appears that most of the capacity building activities matched the needs of the beneficiaries, some others needed some additional refinement. The workshop in Amman, for example, set clear learning outcomes that it generally managed to achieve, although often in a limited sense. Participants that took part in the tour along the Ministry of Labour in Jordan and PES centres stated the intention of also hosting the ILO and other relevant organisations inside the ministries to foster cooperation in order to further increase capacity in a pragmatic and day to day way. Though, some participants indicated that the workshop was very theoretical and expressed the need for more practical guidance to be able to implement the AP.[36]

In addition, the specific needs of the KRG in terms of implementing a monitoring and evaluation system for the KEP and employment specifically was underestimated at the start of the project. Both officials of the KRG and ILO staff members, in this regard, mentioned the absence of a database for

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[33] ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist; ILO DWT Specialist; MoLSA - DG of Labour, Social Insurance and TVET, Member of Employment Policy Unit; Representative of Ministry of Higher Education; Representative of Ministry of Agriculture; Representative of Ministry of Municipality and Tourism.
[34] ILO Research Economist; ILO Programme Officer.
[35] Advisor to MoLSA; Representative of Ministry of Agriculture; Representative of Ministry of Higher Education; Representative of Ministry of Municipality and Tourism.
[36] Advisor to the MoLSA; Representative of Ministry of Higher Education; Representative of Ministry of Municipality and Tourism; Representative of Investment Authority; Representative of Trade Union; ILO DWT Specialist.

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the KRI with information on employment rates.[37] Moreover, monitoring only made up a small portion of the capacity building activities and most participants expressed the need for additional training on this topic.[38] Lastly, ILO staff and KRG officials also indicated that the need for creating PES centres across the KRI remains.[39]

3.1.2 Validity of Design
Even though the project structure was coherent and planned outcomes logically contributed to the project objectives, some assumptions in the project design prevented the full achievement of some of these objectives. Setting more realistic timeframes for each of the project phases (such as for the recruitment of essential project staff) and conducting more thorough needs assessments of the capacity of the KRG as an organisation and of its staff could have prevented some of the financial and time constraints the project faced.

In terms of needs of the beneficiaries, the project assumptions with regards to financial and human capacity of the KRG were too high. ILO staff members, for example, expected the tripartite partners and the EPU to take the lead in the implementation of the project, but they lacked the human and knowledge capacities to do so.[40] In addition, while the project successfully managed to design and reach consensus on roadmaps and strategic plans, the KRG structurally lacked the budget to implement them. In combination with the fact that some of the essential data for designing the project activities was not readily available in the KRI, it would be recommendable in future programming to conduct a needs assessment that accurately maps the capacity and needs of a government. This way, project activities and project assumptions can be tailored to the specific situation of the targeted region.

> *"The expert asked for accurate data, but we did not have such data. The expert asked about our budget, but we did not have a budget either. What can the expert do about this? In the end he is not a wizard."*
> **Representative of the Ministry of Higher Education**

The timeframe set out of this project was also not entirely realistic. The project was scheduled to start in December 2013 and end in November 2014, but in reality implementation only started in earnest in April 2015 and the project finished in June 2018.[41] The main reason for the delay in implementation was difficulties ILO faced in recruiting a local CTA. It appears that the project design did not allot sufficient time for the recruitment of this CTA and did not take into account obstacles the project might face finding a CTA who was accepted by each of the stakeholders and who possessed the technical requirements for the position. Although initial work was carried out before the hiring of the CTA in 2015, much of this initial work had to be reassessed and a new plan for moving forward was devised upon his hiring.

In addition, the number of priority interventions initially identified under the AP was unrealistic given the constraints in time and resources to implement these emergency interventions under this project. While the project lost time at first, focussing on a total of 82 priority interventions, the project was adjusted to a more realistic scope later on. The first CTA already reduced the number of priority interventions to 33, which were then further reduced to 11 to speed up a satisfactory conclusion of

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[37] ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist; ILO Research Economist; Representative of Trade Union; Representative of Ministry of Higher Education.
[38] Advisor to KRG MoLSA; Member of Employment Policy Unit.
[39] ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist; ILO Research Economist; Representative of Trade Union; Representative of Ministry of Higher Education.
[40] ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist; ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist; ILO DWT Specialist.
[41] 'KRG AP Project- Achievements and Timeline'.

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the project. This did, however, cause some dissatisfaction with the members of the EPU and the Director of the Operating Department because they perceived the first list of priorities as highly relevant and considered the reduced number not to respond to all needs of the KRI.

It remains unclear what monitoring and evaluation framework was used to monitor the progress of the project outputs, outcomes and objectives. No documents related to monitoring and evaluation of the project were shared with Forcier at the time of writing this report, and none of the progress reports mentioned the monitoring and evaluation framework used. In addition, none of the respondents of the qualitative interviews mentioned any monitoring and evaluation mechanisms applied during the project period. Given the character of the project, however, it is likely that deadlines for specific deliverables of the project were agreed upon between the ILO and the KRG (as sole donor and beneficiary) on an on-going basis.

3.2 Efficiency

3.2.1 Efficiency of Implementation
As mentioned in the previous section, some project assumptions resulted in considerable delays in the project. These delays also negatively impacted the efficiency of implementation of the project activities and the spending of allocated funds. Some factors, such as staff recruitment and turnover, and translations of the AP caused particularly long delays in the project's implementation. Other factors that negatively affected the project budget included insufficient assessment of cost-sharing opportunities and not attracting third party donors to support the KRG with PES centres.

While regular staff turnover generally delayed the implementation of the project because new staff needed time to familiarise themselves with the project, particular delays were caused by the recruitment of CTAs. Not only did it take more than a year to hire the first CTA (delaying the full scale start of the project until April 2015), this CTA also left the project before it was completed and more time was lost recruiting a replacement. The international consultant replacing the CTA was also perceived to have negatively affected the project's efficiency by some of the project's beneficiaries because this CTA had less knowledge of the local context.[42]

The first CTA was recruited locally and possessed vast knowledge of the local circumstances, but it was difficult to assess the performance of this CTA because of the short duration of their employment. In addition, the project could not afford further delays of recruiting another local CTA with similar experience. Therefore, an international consultant with extensive knowledge on employment policies, but with less awareness of the local context, was recruited to complete the project. While hiring a local CTA would be preferable, both CTAs and international consultants have their merits. In future project's it may be recommendable to initially recruit an international CTA to prevent delays in implementation and they could simultaneously support with the recruitment of a local CTA to eventually lead the project.

Another cause of delays and budgetary constraints was that the project and budget had not taken language differences into account.[43] Not all members of the KRG spoke English or Arabic, while some ILO staff, on the other hand, did not always speak Arabic or Kurdish. These language barriers caused

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[42] Member of Employment Policy Unit; Representative of Trade Union; Representative of Ministry of Higher Education; Representative of Ministry of Municipality and Tourism.
[43] ILO Programme Officer; ILO Research Economist.

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some difficulties in communication especially considering the extent to which remote coordination was required, the need for translation of some of the key deliverables of the project, and subsequent delays in implementation. While a draft for the AP was finalised in February 2017[44], the roadmap and an addendum to the AP could only be presented to stakeholders during the workshop in Amman in March 2018 and were shared with them in June 2018[45]. Several stakeholders had reported only receiving a final translation of the action plan days before the evaluation was made.

Moreover, some of the project activities were implemented outside of the KRI at the request of the KRG. The initial number of six meetings, however, was brought back to a meeting at the start of the project in Beirut and a workshop towards the end of the project in Amman. ILO staff and beneficiaries agreed that, in hindsight, these activities could have been organised in the KRI and that organising them elsewhere caused cost-inefficiencies with regard to transportation and accommodation.[46] The tour through Amman visiting PES centres, however, was successful in terms of learning and indeed contributed to the success of the project, and limiting the number of meetings outside of Iraq resulted in some of the budget to be available for other activities. Though, in future programming workshops and meetings should be implemented in-country where possible.

Furthermore, cost-sharing is one of ILO's key priorities. The project planned for building new PES centres, while these already existed in the KRI.[47] During the evaluation process, some ILO staff still indicated the need for establishing new centres[48], while it may have been worth considering rehabilitating the existing centres and offering capacity building to their staffs. In future programming, it is essential to thoroughly map available facilities and assess their capacity before designing the project. This way, the project can not only build on existing capacities, but also cost-share some of the cost associated with strengthening existing services. In addition, this may help with attracting third party donors to help the KRG specifically with setting up employment services.

3.2.2 Effectiveness of Management Arrangements

On paper, the responsibilities of each of the stakeholders were clearly defined and, overall, ILO staff reported the relationship with stakeholders to be positive and the issues experienced minimal. Though, some misunderstandings occurred on who was expected to take the lead on certain project matters. Overall ILO had expected the EPU to take lead in the project and expected the KRG to take lead in communication, but both parties expected the same from ILO.[49] Both ILO staff and beneficiaries, therefore, agreed that communication between stakeholders for this project could have been more effective in quality and quantity to avoid misunderstandings.[50]

Miscommunications on matters such as about the number of participants for the workshop in Amman[51], were perceived as a lack of transparency of ILO by some of the beneficiaries of the project, and it created mistrust between stakeholders.[52] In addition, beneficiaries experienced hesitant

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[44] International Labour Organization; Kurdistan Regional Government.
[45] Representative of Investment Authority; Representative of the Ministry of Municipality and Tourism; Representative of the Ministry of Higher Education; Representative of the Ministry of Agriculture.
[46] ILO Programme Officer ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist.
[47] Representative of Trade Union.
[48] ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist; ILO Research Economist.
[49] ILO DWT Specialist.
[50] ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist; ILO Research Economist ILO Research Economist; Advisor to MoLSA; MoLSA - DG of Labour, Social Insurance and TVET; Representative of Trade Union.
[51] The KRG had expected about 120 to receive training, while in reality only 18 people benefited from this workshop.
[52] Members of Employment Policy Unit.

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support from ILO during the advancement and subsequent pushback of ISIS[53], while ILO staff expressed uncertainty about urgency of the project in light of the new humanitarian crisis in the KRI and the need for balancing communications between the KRG and the Federal Government of Iraq.[54]

In general, clear agreements about the implementation plan and stakeholder responsibilities should be agreed on before the start of the project to avert misunderstandings and delays, and preserve mutual trust between stakeholders. In addition, communication in future programming could be improved by, for example, organising bimonthly meetings with stakeholders or by distributing a monthly newsletter to all stakeholders informing on the progress of project implementation.[55]

As for monitoring of the progress of the project, neither the interviews conducted for this evaluation, nor the project documents were unclear on methods used. While some project reports and mission reports were produced during the project's lifetime, no systematic monitoring documentation seems to have been in place. The absence of these record and communication issues may both have had a slowing impact on the pace of progress in the project. Had systematic monitoring been conducted, issues causing delays in implementations could have been flagged and addressed at an earlier stage.

3.3 Effectiveness

This section assesses the extent to which planned project outcomes in support of the specific objectives of the project as described in the first chapter of this report. Within the scope of this study it was not possible to measure if more men and women were provided with access to productive employment, decent work and income in the KRI. The table below provides an overview of project achievements for each of the planned project outcomes. Overall, most of the outcomes have been achieved without ILO having to divert from the original project plan, making the project relatively effective and involved stakeholders were satisfied with the project's results.

Table 4. Project Results

Capacity Building of the KRG	Development of an Action Plan	Implementation of Priority Areas
1. A high-level committee was established for the development of the AP under the supervision of the first CTA	1. The CTAs identified a total of 11 priority interventions for the implementation of the KEP	1. A roadmap for the development of PES in the KRI was drafted and presented during the workshop in Amman
2. A total of 18 focal points were appointed to coordinate the development of the AP within ministries and relevant bodies[56]	2. The action plan was developed under supervision of the CTAs, received approval of the KRG and was shared with the focal points	
3. The EPU was established as part of MoLSA to support with developing the AP and	3. Systems and mechanisms for implementation of the action	

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[53] MoLSA - DG of Labour, Social Insurance and TVET; Members of Employment Policy Unit.
[54] ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist.
[55] ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist; ILO Research Economist.
[56] These include the Ministries of Planning, Finance and Economy, Higher Education, Interior, Education, Electricity, Construction and Housing, Municipality and Tourism, Culture and Youth, Natural Resources, Trade and Industry, and Agriculture; the Kurdistan Board of Investment; the tripartite partners of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment and the Trade Union; the Council of Women's Affairs and the Human Rights Commission.

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carrying responsibility for the implementation of the KEP	plan still remain to be developed.	

Only two of the project outcomes were not met, due to decreased capacity and financial resources of the KRG during the crisis in the KRI in 2014 and 2015. Both project documents provided by ILO and interviews conducted for this evaluation do not provide information on any systems or mechanisms put in place to allow for the implementation of the KEP other than the appointed focal points and EPU. They do not provide much information on what kind of system or kinds of mechanisms the project aimed to establish either. It is likely that, due to changes in the situation in the KRI and in beneficiaries' needs, this outcome could no longer be achieved.

Indeed, the changing situation in the KRI was the main reason for MoLSA to prioritise other aspects of the project and, after discussing with the ILO, suspend the development of a framework for a skills development strategy.[57] This was decided, even though beneficiaries were most positive about the revitalisation of the PES and about creating a better match between available skills in the labour force and skills demanded by the labour market.[58]

Moreover, gender equality was specifically addressed in the identified 11 emergency interventions as part of the AP. These interventions proposed better anti-discrimination laws; the creation of child care centres and services for children with working parents; the improvement of transportation systems; and the creation of work-from-home schemes. Beneficiaries also mentioned specific attention the project had paid to women empowerment in each of the different activities.[59]

However, to ensure the inclusion of women empowerment in the implementation of the KEP, additional focus on gender mainstreaming and women empowerment would have been needed to meet the existing capacities of project beneficiaries.[60] In addition, some beneficiaries reported that women had limited access to some of the project activities, because they were organised abroad on request of MoLSA. Women in the KRI are not always free to travel as it is unusual for them to travel alone without a male guardian.[61] Other members of the KRG, however, noted that no women were involved in this project or activities relevant to the workshop in Amman.[62] Generally, in future programming, inclusion of women should be taken in to careful consideration when designing the project activities to ensure full and equal participation of female staff.

In future programming, effectiveness could be increased by stationing at least one ILO staff member in the location of implementation but this of course would be contingent upon the availability of resources for such a person. For much of the early phases, the first CTA was the only ILO staff member present in the KRI. The second CTA was not based in Erbil and undertook several field missions to meet with relevant officials instead. ILO staff indicated that the absence of presence in the KRI slowed down the implementation process.[63] Having permanent presence of at least one ILO project staff with direct lines of communication would have allowed for timely prevention of delays, misunderstandings and differences in expectations.

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[57] ILO Programme Officer; ILO Research Economist; ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist
[58] Member of Employment Policy Unit; Director of Operating Department; Director of Operating Department
[59] Member of Employment Policy Unit; Director of Operating Department.
[60] ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist.
[61] MoLSA - DG of Labour, Social Insurance and TVET; Member of Employment Policy Unit.
[62] Ministry of Labour in validation of Draft Report.
[63] ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist; ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist; ILO DWT Specialist.

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Involvement of the tripartite partners of workers' and employers' organisations concentrated around project implementation (rather than design) but was perceived as very limited.[64] ILO staff members made efforts to involve members of the Trade Union, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the EPU in drafting the AP, prioritising interventions and developing the roadmap. Their capacities, however, did not allow for them to take the lead in any of these activities. Therefore, it is recommendable to conduct an organisational capacity assessment prior to finalising the project design in future programming. This way, additional capacity building activities for key stakeholders could still be included to make sure they can contribute to the project activities.

3.4 Impact

The achievements of the project to date mostly regard the establishment of the required bodies, frameworks, working plans and priority interventions for the implementation of the KEP. As a result of the series of crises that the KRI experienced, capacity building of beneficiaries and actual policy implementation and, therefore, wider impact of the project remained limited. However, the project did open up dialogue between, offered direction to and created motivation of involved government bodies and tripartite partners for the implementation of the KEP and subsequently encourage the KRI's economy.

Most tripartite constituents often did not have the capacity for meaningful contributions to project activities and are still in need of capacity building activities. However, members of the KRG and MoLSA agreed that these tripartite partners, including the Trade Union and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry are very willing to continue their contribution to the project. These partners themselves confirmed this willingness to support the implementation of the AP and the KEP, but expressed the need for continued support of the ILO to bring implementation to a success.

While most institutional bodies, policies and action plans have been created, human capacity to execute these plans has not received the same level of attention during the project. Budgetary constraints of the KRG and external needs (such as the refugee and IDP crisis in the region) led to the merging of three capacity building activities into one (the Amman workshop in March 2018), compromising its learning outcomes and impact.[65] In addition, the contents of the workshop were experienced as highly theoretical, offering limited practical guidance on how to use the AP and implement the KEP. Furthermore, the KRG Ministry of Labour indicates that the delays in implementation directly impacted the current readiness of the KRG and limited capacity building, due to the long time gaps between training sessions.[66]

Based on the findings of this evaluation and to consolidate the project's achievements, continuation of the project at this stage appears to be justifiable. It appears that local capacities are not yet sufficient of independent continuation of the implementation of the AP and the KEP. Therefore, it is highly advisable to continue the project's support make sure the current impact is not lost. This continued support should mostly focus on strengthening institutional capacity by providing practical guidance to involved stakeholders for the implementation of the AP, and improving systems and databases for monitoring employment and monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the

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[64] ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist; ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist.
[65] Members of Employment Policy Unit; Representative of Ministry of Higher Education
[66] KRG Ministry of Labour at validation of Draft Report.

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AP. This way, the KRG themselves are able to make policy adjustments based on progress made as a result of the KEP where necessary.

3.5 Sustainability

The project intended for its beneficiaries to be able to independently implement the KEP after the completion of the project. However, the achievements of the project are not likely to be sustained and implementation of the KEP is unlikely to be successful if additional outside support is not offered. Beneficiaries and ILO staff members agreed that the current capacities of the tripartite partners are insufficient for independent implementation and further support is required.[67] On-going close collaboration between the ILO and implementing entities within the KRG would certainly provide further guidance to best practices in day-to-day implementation of the action plan and the NEP.

While limited capacities of the tripartite partners, in part, are a result of the internal crisis the KRI went through during the implantation of the project,[68] project design should have taken these risks into account. KRI and Iraq regularly experience periods of instability that may result in reduced availability of human and financial resources. For projects such as this one, these changes seriously jeopardise the sustainability of the project activities when these risks are not mitigated. To safeguard the sustainability of the project's impacts, capacity building should have received continuous attention throughout the project lifespan.

Besides conducting capacity assessments of all involved government and tripartite partners, stronger focus on progress monitoring and evaluation during the implementation of the project could have ensured early detection of the limitations in capacity of the beneficiaries. In addition, such monitoring and evaluation frameworks should have included rigorous follow-up to ensure that capacity building activities resulted in the desired learning outcomes, or timely change the design of the activities to the beneficiaries' needs.[69]

> *"For example, if someone teaches me to use a welding machine and keeps on explaining for hours, the moment I will try to actually use the machine, I will make a mistake. My teacher should be there to correct me."*
> **Representative of the Trade Union**

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[67] ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist; Advisor to KRG MoLSA.
[68] Director of Operating Department; Representative of Ministry of Higher Education
[69] Representative of Ministry of Agriculture; ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist

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4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Despite the delays in implementation, the project was successful in achieving most of the planned outcomes: a high-level committee was established that developed the AP under the supervision of the CTAs; focal points were appointed to coordinate this process within ministries and other relevant bodies; the EPU, responsible for the implementation of the KEP, was established; priority intervention for the implementation of the KEP were defined; the AP received approval from the KRG and was shared with the focal points; and a roadmap for the development of PES has been drafted. In addition, tripartite partners expressed great motivation and commitment to the AP and the implementation of the KEP. Therefore, the project managed to pave the way for successful implementation of the KEP at policy and institutional level.

Efficiency of the project was compromised by underestimating the effort needed to recruit a suitable local CTA and by the absence of proper needs and capacity assessments before designing project activities. The recruitment process of the first CTA and delayed the implementation of the project by more than two years. Needs and capacity assessments would also have prevented mismatches between the existing capacities of the beneficiaries and planned capacity building activities and the impact of the project resulting from these. Because of the absence of these assessments, the project design heavily relied on the establishment of required governmental bodies, plans and policies while underestimating the importance of human capacity to execute these plans and policies.

The influx of refugees from Syrian and IDPs fleeing conflict in Ninevah, reduced support of the Iraqi Federal Government, and the 2015 drop in oil prices, further constrained the available financial and human resources the KRG had available. The project design had to be adjusted and left limited room for sufficient capacity building for stakeholders responsible for the eventual implementation of the action and the formulation of a skills development framework.

In addition, infrequent communication and the absence of a rigorous progress monitoring system did not allow for timely response and adjustments in project design where these would have been necessary. Miscommunications occurred on who would take the lead in producing some of the project deliverables, the capacities of tripartite partners were overestimated, monitoring was insufficient for the project timeline, learning-outcomes did not receive sufficient follow-up. In part, these issues could have been mitigated through closer involvement of ILO in overseeing the project and permanently having ILO staff based in Erbil for this purpose.

In order to safeguard the sustainability of the project's achievement, it is recommendable for ILO to continue support and to utilize expand upon the work carried out during this project to further mobilize resources for future employment programming. The capacity of key stakeholders responsible for the implementation of the KEP remains insufficient, systems and mechanism such as databases to monitor the implementation of the KEP are not yet in place and no framework has been developed for skills development to match demand of the labour market. For this reason, continued support should focus on establishing these systems, mechanisms and frameworks and should provide additional capacity building and practical guidance at implementation level for the successful implementation of the AP and some of the emergency interventions.

Table 5. Recommendations

Recommendations	Specifics
Recommendation 1:	*Audience*: ILO ROAS staffs who are involved in decision making on resource

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Continue support supporting he KRG in rolling out the AP for implementation of the KEP	allocation in the region and ILO ROAS staffs who are involved in drafting regional programmes and relevant tripartite partners
	Action: Continue supporting the KRG in rolling-out the Action Plan for the implementation of the KEP by providing additional capacity building activities and practical guidance for the implementation of the AP to relevant stakeholders
	Prioritisation: High
	Timeframe: This recommendation should be implemented as soon as possible to maintain momentum, motivation and mutual trust between stakeholders for the implementation of the AP and the KEP
	Resource Implications: This recommendation will require substantial human and financial resources of ILO, the KRG and other tripartite partners
Recommendation 2: Assist the KRG in setting-up a monitoring system for employment	*Audience*: ILO ROAS staffs who are involved in drafting regional programmes and relevant tripartite partners
	Action: Assist the KRG in setting up a regional employment-monitoring database to enable evidence based implementation of the KEP as well as adjusting policies where appropriate. This will require training and capacity building of relevant officials in the KRG
	Prioritisation: Medium
	Timeframe: This recommendation should be implemented simultaneously with the first recommendation for
	Resource Implications: This recommendation requires substantial human and financial resources of both ILO and the KRG
Recommendation 3: Conduct thorough needs and capacity assessments of key stakeholders involved in policy implementation and monitoring	*Audience*: ILO ROAS staffs who are involved in programme design and project implementation
	Action: Prior to the implementation of a project, a needs and capacity assessment should be conducted to inform project and activity design. In addition, these assessments may shed light on context specific needs beneficiaries or groups of beneficiaries may have (for example in terms of the inclusion of women). This way, project design is likely to ensure better results against the planned project outcomes
	Prioritisation: Medium
	Timeframe: This recommendation should be implemented before prior to implementation of each similar project in the future. Depending on available knowledge from this project, it may be recommendable to conduct such assessments before continuing capacity building activities.
	Resource Implications: Conducting needs and capacity assessment required moderate human and financial resources
Recommendation 4: Improve progress monitoring and communication with key stakeholders of the project	*Audience*: ILO ROAS staffs who are involved in programme design and project implementation
	Action: Increase the quality and quantity of communication with beneficiaries and key stakeholders during project implementation through regular meetings and newsletters/updates guided by ILO staff with permanent presence in the project location. This way, project progress can be closely monitored and issues timely addressed
	Prioritisation: Medium
	Timeframe: This recommendation should be implemented simultaneously with the project

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	Resource Implications: Resources required for this recommendation are dependent on the type of staff recruited for this purpose
Recommendation 5: *Optimise recruitment processes of key project staff*	***Audience***: ILO staffs involved in the design of employment policy programmes
	Action: Realistic timeframes should be included in the project design for recruiting key project staff, such as CTAs. In projects where hiring a local CTA is expected to be challenging, an international CTA, based in the target region, should be contracted temporarily for the first project phase. Recruitment of a permanent local CTA should be included in the TOR of the temporary CTA
	Prioritisation: Medium
	Timeframe: This recommendation should be implemented during the design of employment policy projects. This recommendation should apply to any future projects
	Resource Implications: This recommendation requires little human or financial resources
Recommendation 6: *Continued programme support should be implemented in a broader context targeting Iraq as a whole*	***Audience***: ILO ROAS staffs involved in programme design and project implementation, KRG, Government of Iraq and other relevant stakeholders
	Action: For the continuation of the project, the government of Iraq should also receive support to ensure that sufficient resources are and can be made available for the KRG to implement the project plans.
	Prioritisation: Medium
	Timeframe: This recommendation should be implemented simultaneously with the project
	Resource Implications: This recommendation will require substantial human and financial resources of ILO, the KRG and the government of Iraq

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5. Lesson Learned and Emerging Good Practices

The following includes lessons learned and emerging good practices that emerged from the assessment conducted for this evaluation. These serve to foster organisational learning, inform future programming and improve project performance, outcome and impact. More specific descriptions of the lessons learned and emerging good practices according to ILO's specific requirements are included in Annex 3 and Annex 4 of this report.

Table 6. Lessons Learned

Lesson Learned	Description
1. Communication	The absence of permanent presence of ILO staff members and infrequent communication between ILO and key stakeholders of the project allowed for miscommunications, differences in expectations, insufficient progress monitoring and delayed response to occurring issues in implementation of the project. This seriously hampered the efficiency and effectiveness of the project and occasionally created mistrust between the tripartite partners. In future programming, permanent presence of at least one ILO staff member should be ensured to maintain frequent communication, rigorous progress monitoring, and function as focal point in timely response of emerging issues in implementation
2. Recruitment	Hiring of expert project staff, such as CTAs, with the required technical knowledge and that receive acceptance from all key stakeholders at local level should generally be perceived as very challenging and time-consuming. As such, future programming may prevent lengthy delays in project implementation and improve efficiency and management arrangements by starting the project with a temporary internationally recruited CTA based in the region of project implementation and with the recruitment of a permanent local CTA as one of their core responsibilities
3. Capacity and Needs Assessments	Insufficient insight in beneficiaries' needs and capacities further increased miscommunication, differences of expectations, and limited relevance and underestimation of the importance of capacity building activities. This reduced the effectiveness and impact of the project, and requires additional support for impact to-date to sustain. For fully informed project design relevant to the specific context of each similar future project, capacity assessments of key stakeholders and broad needs assessments should be conducted first

Table 7. Emerging Good Practices

Lesson Learned	Description
1. Tripartite Involvement	The participatory approach of including representatives from 18 ministries and other bodies as focal points in the project to support the EPU with the implementation of the KEP in each of their respective working areas, fostered broad support of the KEP across all bodies of the KRG. In other context, similar tripartite inclusion is likely to encourage similar support and increase opportunities for positive project outcomes
2. Policy and Institutional Approach	At policy and institutional level, the project design allowed for a relatively simple organisational structure for the implementation of the KEP that ensured transparency for all involved parties, clearly stipulated responsibilities during implementation and (in the design) included frameworks for progress monitoring. In addition, this structure solely relied on local capacity, but allowed for external (ILO) guidance. Building on existing structures is highly likely to prove successful in future programming in different contexts as well.

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Annex 2: Lessons Learned Template

Table 8. Lessons Learned Template

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Project TC/SYMBOL: IRQ/13/01/IRQ

Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting   **Date: July 24, 2018**
The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Brief and little communication between ILO and its beneficiaries or donors allows for misunderstandings or mismatches in expectations for the course of the project.
Context and any related preconditions	A number of misunderstandings and mismatches in expectations occurred between the service provider (i.e. ILO) and the beneficiaries (i.e. the KRG and tripartite constituents). Brief and little communication seemed to be linked to these misunderstandings and different expectations
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO project staffs who are involved in communicating with project beneficiaries and/or donors (in this project the beneficiary and donor were the same entity).
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	During the project, the project beneficiaries as well as the ILO appeared to have had expectations that did not match the actual course of the project.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ

Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting   **Date: July 24, 2018**
The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	The hiring of Chief Technical Advisors took much longer than expected. Consequently, the project was much delayed for multiple times. Especially the hiring of a local Chief Technical Advisor took longer than expected.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson learned applies especially to regions with restrained human resources, as it is expected that hiring local Chief Technical Advisors in such areas is challenging.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO project staffs who are involved in hiring experts for especially employment projects.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	The hiring of Chief Technical Advisors took much longer than expected and thereby delayed the project and decreased the projects' efficiency.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ILO Lesson Learned Template	
Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy **Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ**	
Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting **Date:** July 24, 2018 **The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.**	
LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	During the first part of the project, an ILO staff member was present in Erbil, the location of implementation of the project. During the second part of the project, however, this staff member was not present anymore in the location of project implementation. Not having an ILO staff member, who is involved in the project in the location of implementation, clearly decreased the efficiency and effectiveness of the project, as beneficiaries experienced decreased support from the ILO during the time of absence of this local ILO staff member. Consequently, the beneficiaries did not feel empowered to take the lead in the implementation of the project, resulting in a delayed implementation. As such, not having a local ILO project staff member in the actual location of implementation can be disabling.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson learned applies especially to situations with little perceived capacity of the project beneficiaries, as especially those beneficiaries will be in need of close cooperation with the ILO.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO project staffs who are involved in the design of projects, especially in deciding what staffs will be hired and what their duties will be, including duty stations.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Project efficiency and effectiveness were slightly compromised due to the absence of an ILO project staff member at the location of the implementation of the project. Through the absence of project staff at the location of implementation, project beneficiaries had less support while implementing the project, which compromised the project efficiency and effectiveness.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	
ILO Lesson Learned Template	
Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy **Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ**	
Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting **Date:** July 24, 2018 **The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.**	
LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Both the ILO and the granting organization/beneficiaries had different expectations when it comes to the level of support from ILO to the project beneficiaries. Clearly, beneficiaries expected much more support from the ILO, whereas the ILO had not anticipating on providing such levels of intense support during the project implementation.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson learned applies especially to ILO projects in which the donor organization and beneficiary are the same entity.

Targeted users / Beneficiaries	This lesson learned is meant for ILO staff members who are involved in communication with both donors and project beneficiaries, especially at the beginning of projects and during contract negotiations.
Challenges /negative lessons – Causal factors	During the project, the donor and beneficiary (which was the same entity during this project) expected more support from the ILO whereas the ILO had not anticipated such high levels of support. Consequently, communication and the effectiveness of management arrangements between the two parties were slightly jeopardized.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ

Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting   **Date: July 24, 2018**
The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	During the project, it became clear that the project beneficiaries did not have the expected capacities for implementing the activities. This lack of expected capacities compromised the projects outcomes in terms of beneficiary involvement as well as efficiency. Initially, the project beneficiaries were expected to take the lead in drafting the Action Plan for the implementation of the employment policy and in implementing the priority interventions. However, during the project it became clear that beneficiaries lacked the capacities to do so and more support from the ILO was required to complete those activities.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson learned applies especially to programs, which make use of expected capacities of project beneficiaries.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	This lesson learned applies to ILO staff members who are involved in the design of programs, but also to ILO staff members who are involved in carrying out these respective programs.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	As reported previously, there was a mismatch between the expected capacities of the project beneficiaries and the actual capacities of the project beneficiaries. As a consequence, beneficiaries did not have the needed support to be actively involved and take the lead in certain project activities. Active involvement of the tripartite partners is one of ILOs core principles during their operations.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	This lesson learned applies to ILO staff members who are involved in drafting ILO programs.

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ

Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting   **Date: July 12, 2018**
The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Brief and little communication between ILO and its beneficiaries or donors allows for misunderstandings or mismatches in expectations for the course of the project.
Context and any related preconditions	A number of misunderstandings and mismatches in expectations occurred between the service provider (i.e. ILO) and the beneficiaries (i.e. the KRG and tripartite constituents). Brief and little communication seemed to be linked to these misunderstandings and different expectations.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO project staffs who are involved in communicating with project beneficiaries and/or donors (in this project the beneficiary and donor were the same entity).
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	During the project, the project beneficiaries as well as the ILO appeared to have had expectations that did not match the actual course of the project.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ

Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting   **Date: July 12, 2018**
The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	The hiring of Chief Technical Advisors took much longer than expected. Consequently, the project was much delayed for multiple times. Especially the hiring of a local Chief Technical Advisor took longer than expected.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson learned applies especially to regions with restrained human resources, as it is expected that hiring local Chief Technical Advisors in such areas is challenging.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO project staffs who are involved in hiring experts for especially employment projects.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	The hiring of Chief Technical Advisors took much longer than expected and thereby delayed the project and decreased the projects' efficiency.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ

Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting   **Date: July 12, 2018**
The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text

Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	During the first part of the project, an ILO staff member was present in Erbil, the location of implementation of the project. During the second part of the project, however, this staff member was not present anymore in the location of project implementation. Not having an ILO staff member who is involved in the project in the location of implementation, clearly decreased the efficiency and effectiveness of the project, as beneficiaries experienced decreased support from the ILO during the time of absence of this local ILO staff member. Consequently, the beneficiaries did not feel empowered to take the lead in the implementation of the project, resulting in a delayed implementation. As such, not having a local ILO project staff member in the actual location of implementation can be disabling.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson learned applies especially to situations with little perceived capacity of the project beneficiaries, as especially those beneficiaries will be in need of close cooperation with the ILO.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO project staffs who are involved in the design of projects, especially in deciding what staffs will be hired and what their duties will be, including duty stations.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Project efficiency and effectiveness were slightly compromised due to the absence of a ILO project staff member at the location of the implementation of the project. Through the absence of project staff at the location of implementation, project beneficiaries had less support while implementing the project, which compromised the project efficiency and effectiveness.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ

Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting   Date: July 12, 2018
The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Both the ILO and the granting organization/beneficiaries (this was the same entity during this project) had different expectations when it comes to the level of support from ILO to the project beneficiaries. Clearly, beneficiaries expected much more support from the ILO, whereas the ILO had not anticipating on providing such levels of intense support during the project implementation.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson learned applies especially to ILO projects in which the donor organization and beneficiary are the same entity.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	This lesson learned is meant for ILO staff members who are involved in communication with both donors and project beneficiaries, especially at the beginning of projects and during contract negotiations.
Challenges /negative lessons – Causal factors	During the project, the donor and beneficiary (which was the same entity during this project) expected more support from the ILO whereas the ILO had not anticipated such high levels of support. Consequently, communication and the effectiveness of management arrangements between the two parties were slightly jeopardized.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	

ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	

ILO Lesson Learned Template

Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ

Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting   **Date: July 12, 2018**
The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	During the project, it became clear that the project beneficiaries did not have the expected capacities for implementing the activities. This lack of expected capacities compromised the projects outcomes in terms of beneficiary involvement as well as efficiency. Initially, the project beneficiaries were expected to take the lead in drafting the Action Plan for the implementation of the employment policy and in implementing the priority interventions. However, during the project it became clear that beneficiaries lacked the capacities to do so and more support from the ILO was required to complete those activities.
Context and any related preconditions	This lesson learned applies especially to programs, which make use of expected capacities of project beneficiaries.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	This lesson learned applies to ILO staff members who are involved in the design of programs, but also to ILO staff members who are involved in carrying out these respective programs.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	As reported previously, there was a mismatch between the expected capacities of the project beneficiaries and the actual capacities of the project beneficiaries. As a consequence, beneficiaries did not have the needed support to be actively involved and take the lead in certain project activities. Active involvement of the tripartite partners is one of ILOs core principles during their operations.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	This lesson learned applies to ILO staff members who are involved in drafting ILO programs.

Annex 3: Emerging Best Practices Template

Table 9. Emerging Best Practices Template

ILO Emerging Good Practice Template	
Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy **Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ**	
Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting **Date: July 12, 2018** The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.	
GP Element	Text
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Many stakeholders were involved in the Employment Policy project and in its implementation, making the project a broad participatory programme. Stakeholders included the Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs, Agriculture, Municipality and Tourism, and Higher Education. Furthermore, stakeholders included the tripartite partners of the Trade Union, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Operating Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Investment Authority and focal points of 18 relevant ministries. This broad participatory approach allowed for a broad support of the Action Plan for the implementation of the Employment Policy.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	Through the inclusion of a broad range of relevant stakeholders in the project, capacity building, endorsement of the priority settings as well as active involvement of the tripartite partners, all objectives of the Employment Policy project, were ensured
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	The impact of this emerging good practice is involvement of both tripartite partners as well as other relevant partners in the project, support for the developed Action Plan and endorsement of priority settings in the Employment Policy. Beneficiaries of this emerging good practice are the tripartite partners and other relevant stakeholders who are involved in the drafting of Employment policies.
Potential for replication and by whom	This emerging good practice is to be replicated by ILO staffs who are involved in drafting programmes that involve Employment Policy, and aim to involve the tripartite partners specifically.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	Active involvement of tripartite partners is one of the core principles of ILOs working strategy, making this lesson learned highly relevant for future ILO projects.
Other documents or relevant comments	
ILO Emerging Good Practice Template	
Project Title: Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy **Project TC/SYMBOL: : IRQ/13/01/IRQ**	
Name of Evaluator: Forcier Consulting **Date: July 12, 2018** The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.	
GP Element	Text

Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	At policy and institutional level, the project design allowed for a relatively simple organisational structure for the implementation of the KEP that ensured transparency for all involved parties, clearly stipulated responsibilities during implementation and (in the design) included frameworks for progress monitoring. In addition, this structure solely relied on local capacity, but allowed for external (ILO) guidance. Building on existing structures is highly likely to prove successful in future programming in different contexts as well.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	Simple structures with clearly defined roles that are in line with other local structures allow for smooth acceptance and adaptation of responsible local-level stakeholders tasked with key responsibilities
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	Indication of willingness to participate and trust in the project's potential. Targeted beneficiaries include all relevant institutional parties whose work field directly or partially relates to the new policies
Potential for replication and by whom	This emerging good practice is to be replicated by ILO staffs who are involved in drafting programmes that involve employment policies as this model can be adapted to each local structure
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	Cooperation with tripartite partners is one of the core principles of ILOs working strategy, making this lesson learned highly relevant for future ILO projects.
Other documents or relevant comments	

Annex 4: List of Interviews

1. ILO Senior Employment Policy Specialist
2. ILO Programme Officer
3. ILO Research Economist
4. ILO Senior Skills and Employment Specialist
5. ILO Decent Work Team Specialist
6. Advisor to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
7. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – Director General of Labour, Social Insurance and Technical and Vocational Education and Training
8. Employment Policy Unit member
9. Employment Policy Unit member
10. Employment Policy Unit member
11. Employment Policy Unit member
12. Director of the Operating Department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
13. Representative of the Trade Union of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq
14. Advisor of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry
15. Representative of the Ministry of Agriculture
16. Representative of the Ministry of Municipality and Tourism
17. Representative of the Investment Authority
18. Representative of the Ministry of Higher Education

Annex 5: Data Collection Tools

SSI ILO Project Staff

<table>
<tr><td>

SECTION 1: Introduction & Relevance

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Please tell me about your role within ILO and within the employment policy project?
[Prompt: Kindly also describe the activities that were carried out within the framework of this project]

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Can you describe the targeted governing entities and their current most pressing needs?
[Prompt: How have these needs changed during the past year?]

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Looking back, which aspects of the project design would you repeat next time and which ones would you change, because they are less appropriate /effective within the given context and community and limited the achievement of the program objectives?
[Prompt: Explain why and please give a practical example of a project element that should be repeated and a project element that should be changed for future programming.]

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Please describe what you think could have been done differently to better match the programme objectives with the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government.
[Prompt: Why do you think there is a mismatch between the programmes' objectives on implementing the employment policy and the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government?]

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SECTION 2: Efficiency

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<tr><td>

How was cost-efficiency ensured?
[Prompt: Did the project rely on already existing local or regional initiatives? How could the efficiency of the project be improved?]

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SECTION 3: Effectiveness

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Please describe to what extent the Kurdistan Regional Government capacity for employment policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation has been improved.
[Prompt: please comment on (1) the action plan for the implementation of the employment policy, (2) the priority settings of this action plan and endorsement of stakeholders (3) on the priority areas for work within the action plan. How could this have been done better?]

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Please describe to what extent the action plan for implementing the employment policy was developed.
[Prompt: How could this have been done better?]

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What challenges were faced during the implementation of the employment policy project?
[Prompt: Kindly elaborate]

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Please describe to what extent the KRG; workers unions and employers unions were involved in the project implementation.
[Prompt: What consisted their involvement of?]

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Please describe to what extent attention was paid at including women?
[Prompt: How could this be improved?]

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

How was the cooperation with the different involved stakeholders?
[Prompt: How was the cooperation with the KRG, workers and employers organisations? How was the cooperation with other ILO entities? Were responsibilities clearly divided? Did you receive sufficient technical support? What went well? What appeared to be bottlenecks? How could this be improved?]

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SECTION 4: Impact & Sustainability

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What, if any, strategies would have been more effective in achieving the desired project objectives?
[Prompt: What were any positive or negative unintended project outcomes? How could the impact of the project be improved?]

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</table>

How does the ILO employment policy project ensure sustainability?
In your opinion, what are the most important changes that the program brought?
[Prompt: Think about capacity of the KRG for employment policy implementation, action plan implementation and priority areas for work]
At this stage, would you advise continuation of the project to enhance project outputs?
[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer]
What is the likely impact of the project at this point, as far as you can assess?
[Prompt: Are the tripartite partners willing to continue the project?]
In your opinion, do you think the results achieved in implementing the employment policy are likely to last?
[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. If not likely to last, what can be done to ensure or improve sustainability of the results?]
SECTION 5: Validity of Design
What was the baseline condition at the beginning of the project and how was this chosen?
Was there a monitoring and evaluation framework? And if so, what did this framework look like and how was it conducted?
[Prompt: Who conducted the monitoring and evaluation? How were gender issues addressed in the M&E framework?]
SECTION 6: Final Remarks
What would your key recommendation be for ILO, if they were to implement a similar project in the future?
Do you have an exemplary anecdote of something that went very well or did not go so well during the project?
Is there anything else that you still would like to say?

SSI with ILO ROAS staff/DTW specialist

SECTION 1: Introduction & Relevance
Please tell me about your role within ILO and within the employment policy project?
[Prompt: Kindly also describe the activities that were carried out within the framework of this project]
Please describe what was done to ensure alignment with other stakeholders?
[Prompt: What was done to ensure alignment with the KRG? What was done to ensure alignment with the workers' organisation(s)? What was done to ensure alignment with the employers' organisations? How could this alignment be improved?]
Please describe how the project objectives relate to the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda?
Please describe what you think could have been done differently to better match the programme objectives with the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government.
[Prompt: Why do you think there is a mismatch between the programmes' objectives on implementing the employment policy and the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government?]
SECTION 2: Efficiency
How was cost-efficiency ensured?
[Prompt: Did the project rely on already existing local or regional initiatives? How could the efficiency of the project be improved?]
SECTION 3: Effectiveness

Please describe the framework of cooperation with the other ILO constituents and tripartite partners.
[Prompt: How were responsibilities divided? How could this be improved? How was the communication between the different stakeholders?]
What challenges were faced during the implementation of the employment policy project?
[Prompt: Kindly elaborate]
Please describe to what extent the KRG; workers unions and employers unions were involved in the project implementation.
[Prompt: What consisted their involvement of?]
Please describe to how attention was paid at including women?
[Prompt: How could this be improved?]

SECTION 4: Impact & Sustainability
What, if any, strategies do you think would have been more effective in achieving the desired project objectives?
[Prompt: What were any positive or negative unintended project outcomes? How could the impact of the project be improved?]
How does the ILO employment policy project ensure sustainability?
At this stage, would you advise continuation of the project to enhance project outputs?
[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer]
What is the likely impact of the project at this point, as far as you can assess?
[Prompt: Are the tripartite partners willing to continue the project?]

SECTION 5: Validity of Design
What was the baseline condition at the beginning of the project and how was this chosen?
Was there a monitoring and evaluation framework? And if so, what did this framework look like and how was it conducted?
[Prompt: Who conducted the monitoring and evaluation? How were gender issues addressed in the M&E framework?]

SECTION 6: Final Remarks
What would your key recommendation, if another such project were to be implemented in the future?
Is there anything else that you still would like to say?

SSI with ILO Headquarters staff

SECTION 1: Introduction & Relevance
Please tell me about your role within ILO and within the employment policy project?
[Prompt: Kindly also describe the activities that were carried out within the framework of this project]
Please describe what was done to ensure alignment with other stakeholders?
[Prompt: What was done to ensure alignment with the KRG? What was done to ensure alignment with the workers' organisation(s)? What was done to ensure alignment with the employers' organisations? How could this alignment be improved?]
Please describe how the project objectives relate to the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda?

SECTION 2: Efficiency
How was cost-efficiency ensured?

[Prompt: Did the project rely on already existing local or regional initiatives? How could the efficiency of the project be improved?]

SECTION 3: Effectiveness
Please describe the framework of cooperation with the other ILO constituents and tripartite partners. *[Prompt: How were responsibilities divided? How could this be improved? How was the communication between the different stakeholders?]*
What challenges were faced during the implementation of the employment policy project? *[Prompt:*
Please describe to what extent the KRG; workers unions and employers unions were involved in the project implementation. *[Prompt: What consisted their involvement of?]*
Please describe to what extent attention was paid at including women? *[Prompt: How could this be improved?]*

SECTION 4: Impact & Sustainability
How does the ILO employment policy project ensure sustainability?
At this stage, would you advise continuation of the project to enhance project outputs? *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer]*

SECTION 5: Validity of Design
What was the baseline condition at the beginning of the project and how was this chosen?
Was there a monitoring and evaluation framework? And if so, what did this framework look like and how was it conducted? *[Prompt: Who conducted the monitoring and evaluation? How were gender issues addressed in the M&E framework?]*

SECTION 6: Final Remarks
What would your key recommendation, if another such project were to be implemented in the future?
Is there anything else that you still would like to say?

SSI with Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs official

SECTION 1: Introduction & Relevance
Please tell me about your role within the MoLSA/MoP and within the employment policy project? *[Prompt: Kindly also describe the activities that were carried out within the framework of this project]*
Can you describe the targeted governing entities and their current most pressing needs? *[Prompt: How have these needs changed during the past year?]*
Looking back, which aspects of the project design would you repeat next time and which ones would you change, because they are less appropriate /effective within the given context and community and limited the achievement of the program objectives? *[Prompt: Explain why and please give a practical example of a project element that should be repeated and a project element that should be changed for future programming.]*
As an official of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs/Planning, to what extent is the project in line with the priorities of the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs/Planning?

[Prompt: What are the priorities of the Kurdistan Regional Government and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs?]
Please describe what you think could have been done differently to better match the programme objectives with the actual needs. *[Prompt: Why do you think there is a mismatch between the programmes' objectives on implementing the employment policy and the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government?]*

SECTION 2: Efficiency

Please describe how cost effective the project was in your opinion? *[Prompt: Why was the project (not) cost effective? Did the project rely on already existing local or regional initiatives? How could the efficiency of the project be improved?]*

SECTION 3: Effectiveness

Please describe to what extent the Kurdistan Regional Government capacity for employment policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation has been improved. *[Prompt: please comment on (1) the action plan for the implementation of the employment policy, (2) the priority settings of this action plan and endorsement of stakeholders (3) on the priority areas for work within the action plan. How could this have been done better?]*
Please describe to what extent the action plan for implementing the employment policy was developed. *[Prompt: How could this have been done better?]*
What challenges were faced during the implementation of the employment policy project? *[Prompt: Kindly elaborate]*
Please describe to what extent the KRG; workers unions and employers unions were involved in the project implementation. *[Prompt: What consisted their involvement of?]*
Please describe to what extent attention was paid at including women? *[Prompt: How could this be improved?]*
Please describe with which stakeholders the MoLSA/MoP has cooperated for the employment policy project? How was the cooperation with these different stakeholders? *[Prompt: How was the cooperation with the KRG, workers and employers organisations? How was the cooperation with other ILO entities? Were responsibilities clearly divided? Did you receive sufficient technical support? What went well? What appeared to be bottlenecks? How could this be improved? How did communication go?]*

SECTION 4: Impact & Sustainability

What, if any, strategies would have been more effective in achieving the desired project objectives? *[Prompt: What were any positive or negative unintended project outcomes? How could the impact of the project be improved?]*
How does the ILO employment policy project ensure sustainability? *[Prompt: In your opinion, was this approach effective? How can this be improved?]*
In your opinion, what are the most important changes that the program brought? *[Prompt: Think about capacity of the KRG for employment policy implementation, action plan implementation and priority areas for work]*
At this stage, would you advise continuation of the project to enhance project outputs? *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. Would the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs/Planning be interested in participating in a continuation of the employment policy project?]*
What is the likely impact of the project at this point, as far as you can assess? *[Prompt: Are the tripartite partners willing to continue the project?]*
In your opinion, do you think the results achieved in implementing the employment policy are likely to last? *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. If not likely to last, what can be done to ensure or improve sustainability of the results?]*

SECTION 5: Validity of Design
In your opinion, were the project objectives set realistically?
[Prompt: Why?]
Was there a monitoring and evaluation framework? And if so, what did this framework look like and how was it carried out?
[Prompt: Who conducted the monitoring and evaluation? How were gender issues addressed in the M&E framework?]
How is sustainability of the project ensured?
[Prompt: Was this approach appropriate?]

SECTION 6: Final Remarks
What would your key recommendation be for ILO, if they were to implement a similar project in the future?
Do you have an exemplary anecdote of something that went very well or did not go so well during the project?
Is there anything else that you still would like to say?

SSI with Ministry of Higher Education

SECTION 1: Introduction & Relevance
Please tell me about your role within the MoE and within the employment policy project?
[Prompt: Kindly also describe the activities that were carried out within the framework of this project]
Can you describe the targeted governing entities and their current most pressing needs?
[Prompt: How have these needs changed during the past year?]
Looking back, which aspects of the project design would you repeat next time and which ones would you change, because they are less appropriate /effective within the given context and community and limited the achievement of the program objectives?
[Prompt: Explain why and please give a practical example of a project element that should be repeated and a project element that should be changed for future programming.]
As an official of the Ministry of Education, to what extent is the project in line with the priorities of the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Ministry of Education?
[Prompt: What are the priorities of the Kurdistan Regional Government and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs?]
Please describe what you think could have been done differently to better match the programme objectives with the actual needs.
[Prompt: Why do you think there is a mismatch between the programmes' objectives on implementing the employment policy and the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government?]

SECTION 2: Efficiency
Please describe how cost effective the project was in your opinion?
[Prompt: Why was the project (not) cost effective? Did the project rely on already existing local or regional initiatives? How could the efficiency of the project be improved?]

SECTION 3: Effectiveness
Please describe to what extent the Kurdistan Regional Government capacity for employment policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation has been improved.

[Prompt: please comment on (1) the action plan for the implementation of the employment policy, (2) the priority settings of this action plan and endorsement of stakeholders (3) on the priority areas for work within the action plan. How could this have been done better?]
Please describe to what extent the action plan for implementing the employment policy was developed. *[Prompt: How could this have been done better?]*
What challenges were faced during the implementation of the employment policy project? *[Prompt: Kindly elaborate]*
Please describe to what extent the KRG; workers unions and employers unions were involved in the project implementation. *[Prompt: What consisted their involvement of?]*
Please describe to what extent attention was paid at including women? *[Prompt: How could this be improved?]*
Please describe with which stakeholders the MoE has cooperated for the employment policy project? How was the cooperation with these different stakeholders? *[Prompt: How was the cooperation with the KRG, workers and employers organisations? How was the cooperation with other ILO entities? Were responsibilities clearly divided? Did you receive sufficient technical support? What went well? What appeared to be bottlenecks? How could this be improved? How did communication go?]*

SECTION 4: Impact & Sustainability

What, if any, strategies would have been more effective in achieving the desired project objectives? *[Prompt: What were any positive or negative unintended project outcomes? How could the impact of the project be improved?]*
How does the ILO employment policy project ensure sustainability? *[Prompt: In your opinion, was this approach effective? How can this be improved?]*
In your opinion, what are the most important changes that the program brought? *[Prompt: Think about capacity of the KRG for employment policy implementation, action plan implementation and priority areas for work]*
At this stage, would you advise continuation of the project to enhance project outputs? *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. Would the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs be interested in participating in a continuation of the employment policy project?]*
What is the likely impact of the project at this point, as far as you can assess? *[Prompt: Are the tripartite partners willing to continue the project?]*
In your opinion, do you think the results achieved in implementing the employment policy are likely to last? *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. If not likely to last, what can be done to ensure or improve sustainability of the results?]*

SECTION 5: Validity of Design

In your opinion, were the project objectives set realistically? *[Prompt: Why?]*
Was there a monitoring and evaluation framework? And if so, what did this framework look like and how was it carried out? *[Prompt: Who conducted the monitoring and evaluation? How were gender issues addressed in the M&E framework?]*
How is sustainability of the project ensured? *[Prompt: Was this approach appropriate?]*

SECTION 6: Final Remarks

What would your key recommendation be for ILO, if they were to implement a similar project in the future?

Do you have an exemplary anecdote of something that went very well or did not go so well during the project?
Is there anything else that you still would like to say?

SSI with Employment Policy Unit members

SECTION 1: Introduction & Relevance
Please tell me about your role within the IP and within the employment policy project? *[Prompt: Kindly also describe the activities that were carried out within the framework of this project]*
Can you describe the targeted governing entities and their current most pressing needs? *[Prompt: How have these needs changed during the past year?]*
Looking back, which aspects of the project design would you repeat next time and which ones would you change, because they are less appropriate /effective within the given context and community and limited the achievement of the program objectives? *[Prompt: Explain why and please give a practical example of a project element that should be repeated and a project element that should be changed for future programming.]*
As a staff of the Implementing Partner, to what extent is the project in line with the priorities of the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs? *[Prompt: What are the priorities of the Kurdistan Regional Government and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs?]*
Please describe what you think could have been done differently to better match the programme objectives with the actual needs. *[Prompt: Why do you think there is a mismatch between the programmes' objectives on implementing the employment policy and the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government?]*
SECTION 2: Efficiency
How was cost-efficiency ensured? *[Prompt: Did the project rely on already existing local or regional initiatives?]*
Please describe how cost effective the project was in your opinion? *[Prompt: Why was the project (not) cost effective? How could the efficiency of the project be improved?]*
SECTION 3: Effectiveness
Please describe to what extent the Kurdistan Regional Government capacity for employment policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation has been improved. *[Prompt: please comment on (1) the action plan for the implementation of the employment policy, (2) the priority settings of this action plan and endorsement of stakeholders (3) on the priority areas for work within the action plan. How could this have been done better?]*
Please describe to what extent the action plan for implementing the employment policy was developed. *[Prompt: How could this have been done better?]*
What challenges were faced during the implementation of the employment policy project? *[Prompt:*
Please describe to what extent the KRG; workers unions and employers unions were involved in the project implementation. *[Prompt: What consisted their involvement of?]*
Please describe to what extent attention was paid at including women? *[Prompt: How could this be improved?]*
Please describe with which stakeholders your organisation has cooperated for the employment policy project? How was the cooperation with these different stakeholders? *[Prompt: How was the cooperation with the KRG, workers and employers organisations? How was the cooperation with other ILO entities? Were responsibilities clearly divided? Did you receive sufficient technical*

support? What went well? What appeared to be bottlenecks? How could this be improved? How did communication go?]

SECTION 4: Impact & Sustainability
What, if any, strategies would have been more effective in achieving the desired project objectives? *[Prompt: What were any positive or negative unintended project outcomes? How could the impact of the project be improved?]*
How does the ILO employment policy project ensure sustainability? *[Prompt: In your opinion, was this approach effective? How can this be improved?]*
In your opinion, what are the most important changes that the program brought? *[Prompt: Think about capacity of the KRG for employment policy implementation, action plan implementation and priority areas for work]*
At this stage, would you advise continuation of the project to enhance project outputs? *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. Would your organisation be interested in participating in a continuation of the employment policy project?]*
What is the likely impact of the project at this point, as far as you can assess? *[Prompt: Are the tripartite partners willing to continue the project?]*
In your opinion, do you think the results achieved in implementing the employment policy are likely to last? *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. If not likely to last, what can be done to ensure or improve sustainability of the results?]*

SECTION 5: Validity of Design
In your opinion, were the project objectives set realistically? *[Prompt: Why?]*
Was there a monitoring and evaluation framework? And if so, what did this framework look like and how was it carried out? *[Prompt: Who conducted the monitoring and evaluation? How were gender issues addressed in the M&E framework?]*
How is sustainability of the project ensured? *[Prompt: Was this approach appropriate?]*

SECTION 6: Final Remarks
What would your key recommendation be for ILO, if they were to implement a similar project in the future?
Do you have an exemplary anecdote of something that went very well or did not go so well during the project?
Is there anything else that you still would like to say?

SSI with Workers' Organisation members

SECTION 1: Introduction & Relevance
Please tell me about your role within Workers' Organisation and within the employment policy project? *[Prompt: Kindly also describe the activities that were carried out within the framework of this project]*
Can you describe the targeted entities and their current most pressing needs? *[Prompt: How have these needs changed during the past year?]*
Looking back, which aspects of the project design would you repeat next time and which ones would you change, because they are less appropriate /effective within the given context and community and limited the achievement of the program objectives?

[Prompt: Explain why and please give a practical example of a project element that should be repeated and a project element that should be changed for future programming.]
Please describe what you think could have been done differently to better match the programme objectives with the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government. *[Prompt: Why do you think there is a mismatch between the programmes' objectives on implementing the employment policy and the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government?]*
In your opinion, were targets for the employment policy implementation project set realistically? *[Prompt: How could this have been done better?]*

SECTION 2: Efficiency

Please describe how cost effective the project was in your opinion? *[Prompt: Why was the project (not) cost effective? Did the project rely on already existing local or regional initiatives? How could the efficiency of the project be improved?]*

SECTION 3: Effectiveness

Please describe to what extent the action plan for implementing the employment policy was developed and endorsed by your organisation. *[Prompt: How could this have been done better?]*
What challenges were faced during the implementation of the employment policy project? *[Prompt: Kindly elaborate]*
Please describe to what extent the KRG; workers unions and employers unions were involved in the project implementation. *[Prompt: What consisted their involvement of?]*
Please describe to what extent attention was paid at including women? *[Prompt: How could this be improved?]*
How was the cooperation with the different involved stakeholders? *[Prompt: How was the cooperation with the KRG, workers and employers organisations? How was the cooperation with other ILO entities? Were responsibilities clearly divided? Did you receive sufficient technical support? What went well? What appeared to be bottlenecks? How could this be improved?]*

SECTION 4: Impact & Sustainability

What, if any, strategies would have been more effective in achieving the desired project objectives? *[Prompt: What were any positive or negative unintended project outcomes? How could the impact of the project be improved?]*
How does the ILO employment policy project ensure sustainability?
In your opinion, what are the most important changes that the program brought? *[Prompt: Think about capacity of the KRG for employment policy implementation, action plan implementation and priority areas for work]*
At this stage, would you advise continuation of the project to enhance project outputs? *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. Would your Workers' Organisation be interested in participating in a continuation of the employment policy project?]*
What is the likely impact of the project at this point, as far as you can assess? *[Prompt: Are the tripartite partners (i.e. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; workers' and employers' organisations) willing to continue the project?]*

SECTION 5: Validity of Design

Was there a monitoring and evaluation framework? And if so, what did this framework look like and how was it conducted? *[Prompt: Who conducted the monitoring and evaluation? How were gender issues addressed in the Monitoring and Evaluation framework?]*

How is sustainability of the project ensured?
[Prompt: Was this approach appropriate?]

SECTION 6: Final Remarks
What would your key recommendation be for ILO, if they were to implement a similar project in the future?
Do you have an exemplary anecdote of something that went very well or did not go so well during the project?
Is there anything else that you still would like to say?

SSI with Representative of Trade Union

SECTION 1: Introduction & Relevance
Please tell me about your role within Employers' Organisation and within the employment policy project? *[Prompt: Kindly also describe the activities that were carried out within the framework of this project]*
Can you describe the targeted entities and their current most pressing needs? *[Prompt: How have these needs changed during the past year?]*
Looking back, which aspects of the project design would you repeat next time and which ones would you change, because they are less appropriate/effective within the given context and community and limited the achievement of the program objectives? *[Prompt: Explain why and please give a practical example of a project element that should be repeated and a project element that should be changed for future programming.]*
Please describe what you think could have been done differently to better match the programme objectives with the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government. *[Prompt: Why do you think there is a mismatch between the programmes' objectives on implementing the employment policy and the actual needs of the Kurdistan Regional Government?]*
In your opinion, were targets for the employment policy implementation project set realistically? *[Prompt: How could this have been done better?]*

SECTION 2: Efficiency
Please describe how cost effective the project was in your opinion? *[Prompt: Why was the project (not) cost effective? Did the project rely on already existing local or regional initiatives? How could the efficiency of the project be improved?]*

SECTION 3: Effectiveness
Please describe to what extent the action plan for implementing the employment policy was developed and endorsed by your organisation. *[Prompt: How could this have been done better?]*
What challenges were faced during the implementation of the employment policy project? *[Prompt: Kindly elaborate]*
Please describe to what extent the KRG; workers unions and employers unions were involved in the project implementation. *[Prompt: What consisted their involvement of?]*
Please describe to what extent attention was paid at including women? *[Prompt: How could this be improved?]*
How was the cooperation with the different involved stakeholders? *[Prompt: How was the cooperation with the KRG, workers and employers organisations? How was the cooperation with other ILO entities? Were responsibilities clearly divided? Did you receive sufficient technical support? What went well? What appeared to be bottlenecks? How could this be improved?]*

SECTION 4: Impact & Sustainability
What, if any, strategies would have been more effective in achieving the desired project objectives?   *[Prompt: What were any positive or negative unintended project outcomes? How could the impact of the project be improved?]*
How does the ILO employment policy project ensure sustainability?
In your opinion, what are the most important changes that the program brought?   *[Prompt: Think about capacity of the KRG for employment policy implementation, action plan implementation and priority areas for work]*
At this stage, would you advise continuation of the project to enhance project outputs?   *[Prompt: Kindly explain your answer. Would your Employers' Organisation be interested in participating in a continuation of the employment policy project?]*
What is the likely impact of the project at this point, as far as you can assess?   *[Prompt: Are the tripartite partners (i.e. Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs; workers' and employers' organisations) willing to continue the project?]*
SECTION 5: Validity of Design
Was there a monitoring and evaluation framework? And if so, what did this framework look like and how was it conducted?   *[Prompt: Who conducted the monitoring and evaluation? How were gender issues addressed in the Monitoring and Evaluation framework?]*
How is sustainability of the project ensured?   *[Prompt: Was this approach appropriate?]*
SECTION 6: Final Remarks
What would your key recommendation be for ILO, if they were to implement a similar project in the future?
Do you have an exemplary anecdote of something that went very well or did not go so well during the project?
Is there anything else that you still would like to say?

Annex 6: Terms of Reference

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Terms of Reference (ToR) for Final Internal Project Evaluation
"Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy"

Key Facts

Key Facts	
TC Symbol:	
Country:	Kurdistan Region, Republic Of Iraq
Project titles:	Support the ministry Of Labour and Social Affairs in Kurdistan to develop an action plan for the implementation of the employment policy
Duration:	12 months
Start Date:	
End Date:	30 June 2018
Administrative unit:	Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS)
Technical Backstopping Unit:	Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS), Employment Department
Collaborating ILO Units:	Employment Policy Department
Evaluation requirements:	Final internal Evaluation
Budget:	505,000 USD

Background Information

Project Background

Despite the efforts of the Kurdish government to reduce the un-employmentrate, unemployment remains to be one of the biggest challenges in the Kurdistan Region. Past challenges intertwined with present conditions have caused unemployment levels to reach 14% in 2009. Additionally there are significant discrepancies between males and females in the labour market, where female unemployment stood at 10.02% in 2009 while male unemployment rate stood at 7.8%. As for the gender-wise distribution of economically active population, the overall economic activity rate of males stood at 67% while female overall economic activity rate stood at 13.7% in 2011. Youth between 15-24 years also suffer from disproportionate unemployment rates at 18% (27% of females and 17% of males.

Within this context, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has started seriously to modernize the economy, giving special attention to employment and social inclusion. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has put forth a number of goals and policies that are aimed at overcoming past challenges that were faced by the region, and is taking steps towards achieving social justice and economic development. Structural imbalances in the Kurdistan Region have forced the region into confronting numerous economic and social challenges, namely employment challenges. The economy has not been generating enough jobs mainly as a result of low investment expenditure thus leading to unemployment. Not to mention the weaknesses in the education system and its inability to provide the right skills and training for young graduates to well-equip them to enter the labour-force/labour market.

The project will assist the Kurdistan Region in implementing its strategic development vision whether through the Regional Development Strategy or the Employment Policy, both of which have been developed on a clear problem analysis. Moreover, the project will support the Government, Workers and Employers to develop an action plan to implement the employment policy and develop

new laws, regulations, and programmes to achieve the broad objective of significantly reducing unemployment through the provision of decent work opportunities.

Module Objectives and Outputs

Development Objective
More women and men have access to productive employment, decent work and income opportunities in Kurdistan Region-Iraq

Immediate Objectives
1. To improve KRG capacity for employment policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation
2. An action plan for the implementation of the NEP is developed with priority setting and endorsed by all.
3. To implement priority areas for work within the action plan

Achievements to date and current implementation status

Since the launching of the technical cooperation project "Support the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Kurdistan to establish an Action Plan to implement the Kurdish National Employment Policy", the following outputs/activities have been achieved/implemented:

1. A High level Tripartite Inter-ministerial Committee for Employment headed by the minister of Labour and Social Affairs was established, representing fourteen ministries in addition to the employers and workers organizations.
2. A technical team of 18 focal points, representing ministries and social partners, was also established, to assist the High Committee for Employment in developing the action plan for the employment policy.
3. An employment policy unit was created in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to follow up on the activities of the project, and ensure the permanent existence of an institution involved in drafting the employment policy implementation plan and monitoring afterwards its implementation.
4. Together with the group of focal points and high inter-ministerial committee, a preliminary study on the priorities of the employment policy was developed by the project's CTA, and 33 interventions were selected out of the 82 interventions proposed in the employment policy document, to be considered as priority interventions when developing the Action Plan.
5. Over the course of the project, ILO provided a number of capacity building activities on employment policy formulation, implementation and monitoring to the government officials, employers and workers' representatives, including the high level committee members and the 18 focal points.
6. An international consultant was then recruited to agree on the final list of priority interventions and assist MOLSA in developing the action plan for the implementation of the employment policy.
7. The action plan and monitoring mechanism, including targets and timelines, was accordingly developed and agreed upon with tripartite constituents, and submitted to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2017.
8. A validation workshop of the action plan was then conducted in early 2018, to present the final document of the Action Plan and build participants' capacities (focal points, staff of employment policy unit and a number of managers of employment offices in the country) on implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the employment policy.
9. Apart from the AP, the project also resulted in conducting a needs assessment for the employment centres in Kurdistan.

10 A road map for the revitalization of employment services in Kurdistan was also developed
11 The Roadmap was presented during the above mentioned validation workshop and discussed with tripartite constituents, and a study tour was organized in Amman to learn from Jordan's experience in PES design and implementation.

The project has succeeded in achieving its expected outcomes (apart from the skills strategy which was no longer a priority for MOLSA), with the final draft of the roadmap for the revitalization of employment services to be delivered by 31 May 2018, taking into account inputs provided during the validation workshop.

Beneficiaries
The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Kurdistan Regional Government is the main direct beneficiary. Other direct beneficiaries of the project are other line ministries such as the Ministry of planning, Ministry of Culture and Youth, Ministry of Education, as well as workers' and employers' organizations.

The indirect and ultimate beneficiaries are the Iraqi Kurdistan women and men who will be better enabled to find decent jobs as a result of the implementation of the project.

Fund Management Arrangements
The sole donor is the Kurdistan Government and the total amount was received and managed by the ILO for implementing the various activities of the project.

Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

Evaluation Background
ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation activities. Provisions are made in all projects in accordance with ILO evaluation policy and based on the nature of the project and the specific requirements agreed upon at the time of the project design and during the project as per established procedures. The Regional Evaluation Officer at the ILO ROAS provides the evaluation function for all ILO projects.

Purpose
A midterm evaluation will be conducted to assess the progress towards the results, identify the main difficulties/constraints that delayed implementation, and formulate lessons learned and practical recommendations to improve the programme implementation for the remainder of the phase and for the following phases. It will examine the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, potential impact and sustainability of the project. The evaluation report shall reflect findings from this evaluation on the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives, produced the desired outputs, and realized the proposed outcomes. This evaluation will also identify strengths and weaknesses in the project design, strategy, and implementation as well as lessons learned with recommendations.

The evaluation will comply with the ILO evaluation policy, which is based on the United Nations Evaluation Norms and Standards and the UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed.

The knowledge generated by the evaluation will be used by ILO ROAS in the design of future similar projects on employment policy in Erbil and the region. In particular the good practices, lessons learned and recommendations produced will be used to identify new opportunities for ILO engagement, improve the implementation and subsequently enhance the resultant impact of projects.

Scope

The evaluation will cover the project ''.

The travel will be to Lebanon and Erbil where the project team and government entities are based, as well as the Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS) is located.

The internal final evaluation will take place during May and June 2018 with 5 days of field visit to Lebanon and erbil to collect information from different stakeholders.

The evaluation will integrate gender equality as a cross-cutting concern throughout its methodology and all deliverables, including the final report.

The primary clients of this evaluation are ILO ROAS, ILO constituents in KRG, the partner UN agencies, government entities, and the donors. Secondary users include other project stakeholders and units within the ILO that may indirectly benefit from the knowledge generated by the evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria and Questions

The evaluation utilises the standard ILO framework and follows its major criteria:

- **Relevance and strategic fit** – the extent to which the objectives are aligned with sub-regional, national and local priorities and needs, the constituents' priorities and needs, and the donor's priorities for the country;
- **Validity of design** – the extent to which the project design, logic, strategy and elements are/remain valid vis-à-vis problems and needs;
- **Efficiency** - the productivity of the project implementation process taken as a measure of the extent to which the outputs achieved are derived from an efficient use of financial, material and human resources;
- **Effectiveness** - the extent to which the project can be said to have contributed to the development objective and the module objectives and more concretely whether the stated outputs have been produced satisfactorily; in addition to building synergies with national initiatives and with other donor-supported projects;
- **Impact** - positive and negative changes and effects caused by the project at the sub regional and national levels, i.e. the impact with social partners, government entities, beneficiaries, etc.;
- **Effectiveness of management arrangements**; and
- **Sustainability** – the extent to which adequate capacity building of social partners has taken place to ensure mechanisms are in place to sustain activities and whether the existing results are likely to be maintained beyond project completion; the extent to which the knowledge developed throughout the project (research papers, progress reports, manuals and other tools) can still be utilised after the end of the project to inform policies and practitioners,

Relevance and strategic fit:

- How well does the project's approach fit context of the on-going crisis in Iraq? To what extent does the project fit into national development and humanitarian response plans?
- How do the project objectives respond to the priorities of the donor?
- Are the project objectives aligned with tripartite constituents' objectives and needs? What measures were taken to ensure alignment? How does the project deal with shortcomings of tripartism characteristic of the region?
- To what extent are project activities linked to the global commitments of the ILO including the Sustainable Development Goals and the agenda 2030?

- Are the planned project objectives and outcomes relevant and realistic to the situation and needs on the ground? Were the problems and needs adequately analysed?

Validity of design:

- Is the project strategy and structure coherent and logical (what are logical correlations between the development objective, module outcomes, and outputs)? Do any changes need to be made to the design of the project?
- On the whole, were project assumptions realistic, were targets realistic, and did the project undergo a risk analysis and design readjustment when necessary?
- Does the project make use of a monitoring and evaluation framework? How appropriate and useful are the indicators in assessing the project's progress? If necessary, how should they be modified to be more useful? Are indicators gender sensitive? Are the means of verification for the indicators appropriate? Are the assumptions for each module objective and output realistic?
- To what extent were the indicators used effective in measuring an increase in self-reliance and an enhancement of social cohesion and the improved capacities of the involved institutions? To what extent were the indicators used effective in measuring enhancement of capacities of ILO constituents?
- What was the baseline condition at the beginning of the project? How was it established?
- Was the strategy for sustainability of impact defined clearly at the design stage of the project? If yes, how? Was the approach taken appropriate to the context?

Effectiveness:

- What progress has the project made so far towards achieving the development objective and module outcomes? In cases where challenges have been faced, what intermediate results can be reported towards reaching the outcomes?
- How have stakeholders been involved in project implementation? To what extent has the project management been participatory and has the participation contributed towards achievement of the project objectives?
- How did outputs and outcomes contribute to ILO's mainstreamed strategies including gender equality, social dialogue, poverty reduction and labour standards?
- To what extent did synergies with and operation through government entities and local organisations help to ensure the sustainability of the impact of the project?
- What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving its objectives?
- What positive or negative unintended outcomes can be identified?

Sustainability:

- Are the results achieved by the project so far likely to be sustainable? What measures have been considered to ensure that the key components of the project are sustainable beyond the life of the project?
- To what extent was sustainability of impact taken into account during the design of the project?

Efficiency:

- To what extent have project activities been cost-effective? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- To what extent has the project been able to build on other ILO or non-ILO initiatives either nationally or regionally, in particular with regard to the creation of synergies in cost sharing?
- What were the intervention benefits and related costs of integrating gender equality?

- How could the efficiency of the project be improved?

Effectiveness of management arrangements:

- What was the division of work tasks within the project team? Has the use of local skills been effective? How does the project governance structure facilitate good results and efficient delivery?
- How clear is the understanding of roles and responsibilities and division of labour between project staff and government entities?
- How effective was communication between the project team, the regional office and the responsible technical department at headquarters? Has the project received adequate technical and administrative support/response from the ILO backstopping units?
- How effectively does the project management monitor project performance and results? Does the project report on progress in a regular and systematic manner, both at regional level, to PROGRAM and the donors? What M&E system has been put in place, and how effective has it been?

Impact orientation:

- What is the likely contribution of the project initiatives to the stated module objectives of the intervention?
- To what extent are national partners able and willing to continue with the project? How effectively has the project built national ownership?
- At this stage, would considering a continuation of the project to consolidate achievements be justifiable? In what way should the next phase differ from the current one?

Challenges, Lessons learned and Specific Recommendations for the formulation of Phase III:

- What good practices can be learned from the project that can be applied to future phases of this project or similar future projects?
- If it were possible, what could have been implemented differently for greater relevance, sustainability, efficiency, effectiveness and impact?

Methodology

An independent evaluator will be hired by the ILO to conduct the evaluation. The following is the proposed evaluation methodology. Any changes to the methodology should be discussed with and approved by the REO and the Project.

Desk Review
The evaluator will review project background materials before conducting any interviews or trips to the country.

Briefing
The evaluator will have an initial consultation with the REO, relevant ILO specialists and support staff in ROAS. The objective of the consultation is to reach a common understanding regarding the status of the project, the priority assessment questions, available data sources and data collection instruments and an outline of the final assessment report. The following topics will be covered: status of logistical arrangements, project background and materials, key evaluation questions and priorities, outline of the inception and final report.

Individual Interviews and/or Group Interviews

Following the initial briefing, the desk review and the inception report, the evaluator will have a mission to Erbil, and have meetings with constituents/stakeholders together with interpreters supporting the process if needed. Individual or group interviews will be conducted with the following:

a) Project staff/consultants that have been active in ILO
b) ILO ROAS DWT Director and DWT Specialists, RPU, Employers' and Workers' Organisations;
c) ILO Headquarters technical departments;
d) Interviews with national counterparts (government/ministries such as MoL, public institutions, social partners, IPs, etc.);
e) Interviews with direct and indirect beneficiaries;
f) Other international agencies working in relevant fields.

Debriefing

Upon completion of the missions, the evaluator will provide a debriefing to the Project team, ILO DWT and HQ on the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations in Beirut at ROAS. The evaluator will also debrief stakeholders to validate results.

Evaluation Timeframe

Responsible person	Tasks	Number of Working days
Evaluator	Desk review of project documents and phone/skype interviews with key informants in Lebanon	3
Evaluator	Inception report	1
Evaluator with the logistical support of project staff	Evaluation mission to Lebanon and Erbil	5
Evaluator with the logistical support of project staff in Lebanon	Presenting preliminary findings)	1
Evaluator	Drafting report	5
Evaluator	Submission of the report to the evaluation manager	
Evaluation manager	Circulating the draft report to key stakeholders	
Evaluation manager	Send consolidated comments to evaluator	
Evaluator	Second Draft	2
Evaluation Manager	Review of Second Draft	
Evaluation Manager	EVAL approval	
Evaluator	Integration of comments and finalization of the report	1

Total days for the evaluator: 18 Days

Evaluation Management

The evaluator will report to the ILO REO in ROAS and should discuss any technical and methodological matters with the REO, should issues arise. The ILO ROAS office will provide administrative and logistical support during the evaluation mission.

Main Deliverables

The main outputs of the evaluation consist of the following:

- Deliverable 1: Inception Report
- Deliverable 2: Draft evaluation report
- Deliverable 3: Stakeholder debrief and Powerpoint Presentation (PPP)
- Deliverable 4: Final evaluation report with executive summary (report will be considered final after an additional review by EVAL. Comments will have to be integrated)
- Translation of the final report to Arabic (Project team)

Inception Report

The evaluator will draft an Inception Report, which should describe, provide reflection and fine-tuning of the following issues:

- Project background
- Purpose, scope and beneficiaries of the evaluation
- Evaluation criteria and questions
- Methodology and instruments
- Main deliverables
- Management arrangements and work plan

Final Report

The final version of the report will follow the below format and be in a range of 20-25 pages in length, excluding the annexes:

1. Title page
2. Table of Contents, including List of Appendices, Tables
3. List of Acronyms or Abbreviations
4. Executive Summary with methodology, key findings, conclusions and recommendations
5. Background and Project Description
6. Purpose of Evaluation
7. Evaluation Methodology and Evaluation Questions
8. Status of objectives
9. Clearly identified findings
10. A table presenting the key results (i.e. figures and qualitative results) achieved per objective (expected and unexpected)
11. Clearly identified conclusions and recommendations (identifying which stakeholders are responsible, priority of recommendations, and timeframe)
12. Lessons Learned
13. Potential good practices
14. Annexes (list of interviews, TORs, lessons learned and best practices templates, list of documents consulted, etc.)

The quality of the report will be assessed against the EVAL Checklists 4, 5, and 6.
The deliverables will be **submitted in the English language, and structured according to the templates provided by the ILO.**

Management Arrangements and Workplan

Requirements
The evaluator should have:

- An advanced degree in economics;
- Proven expertise on evaluation methods, labour markets, conflict issues and the ILO approach;
- Extensive experience in the evaluation of development and employment policy interventions;
- An understanding of the ILO's tripartite culture;
- Knowledge of Iraq and the regional context;
- Full command of the English language (spoken and written) will be required. Command of the national language would be an advantage.

The final selection of the evaluator will be approved by the Regional Evaluation Focal Point in the ILO ROAS based on a short list of candidates prepared in consultations with the ILO technical specialists, EVAL, ILO HQ technical departments, etc.

Roles and Responsibilitie

The External Evaluator is responsible for conducting the evaluation according to the terms of reference (ToR). He/she will:

- Review the ToR and provide input, propose any refinements to assessment questions, as necessary;
- Review project background materials (e.g., project document, progress reports, etc.);
- Prepare an inception report;
- Develop and implement the evaluation methodology (i.e., conduct interviews, review documents, etc.) to answer the evaluation questions;
- Conduct preparatory consultations with the ILO REO prior to the evaluation mission;
- Conduct field research, interviews, as appropriate, and collect information according to the suggested format;
- Present preliminary findings to the constituents;
- Prepare an initial draft of the evaluation report with input from ILO specialists and constituents/stakeholders;
- Conduct a briefing on the findings, conclusions and recommendation of the evaluation to ILO ROAS;
- Prepare the final report based on the ILO, donor and constituents' feedback obtained on the draft report.

The ILO Evaluation Manager is responsible for:

- Drafting the ToR;
- Finalizing the ToR with input from colleagues;
- Preparing a short list of candidates for submission to the Regional Evaluation Officer, ILO/ROAS and EVAL for final selection;
- Hiring the consultant;
- Providing the consultant with the project background materials;
- Participating in preparatory consultations (briefing) prior to the assessment mission;
- Assisting in the implementation of the evaluation methodology, as appropriate (i.e., participate in meetings, review documents);
- Reviewing the initial draft report, circulating it for comments and providing consolidated feedback to the External Evaluators (for the inception report and the final report);
- Reviewing the final draft of the report;
- Disseminating the final report to all the stakeholders;
- Coordinating follow-up as necessary.

The ILO REO[70]:

- Providing support to the planning of the evaluation;
- Approving selection of the evaluation consultant and final versions of the TOR;
- Reviewing the draft and final evaluation report and submitting it to EVAL;
- Disseminating the report as appropriate.

The Project Coordinator is responsible for:

- Reviewing the draft TOR and providing input, as necessary;
- Providing project background materials, including studies, analytical papers, progress reports, tools, publications produced, and any relevant background notes;
- Providing a list of stakeholders;
- Reviewing and providing comments on the inception report;
- Participating in the preparatory briefing prior to the evaluation missions;
- Scheduling all meetings and interviews for the missions;
- Ensuring necessary logistical arrangements for the missions;
- Reviewing and providing comments on the initial draft report;
- Participating in the debriefing on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations;
- Providing translation for any required documents: TOR, PPP, final report, etc.;
- Making sure appropriate follow-up action is take

Legal and Ethical Matters

- This independent evaluation will comply with ILO evaluation guidelines and UN Norms and Standards.
- These ToRs will be accompanied by the code of conduct for carrying out the evaluation "Code of conduct for evaluation in the ILO" (See attached documents).
- UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed throughout the independent evaluation.
- The consultant will not have any links to project management or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence of the evaluation.

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[70] The REO is also the Evaluation Manager.