

Iraq

Decent Work Country Programme

2026- 2029



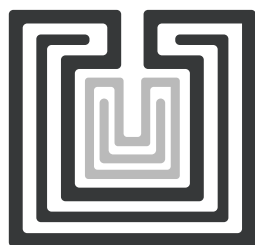


The “Labyrinth of Babylon” refers to the highly complex defensive maze and labyrinthine grounds built by King Nebuchadnezzar II in the 6th century BCE. Designed to protect the royal palace in ancient Babylon, its intertwined mudbrick walls served to confuse, delay, and disorient potential invaders. While the architectural labyrinth surrounded the palace, historians have discovered labyrinth patterns etched into Old Babylonian tablets dating back to ca. 2000–1600 BCE, making them some of the oldest confidently datable labyrinths in human history.

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Foreword: Introduction by the ILO Regional Director

It is my great pleasure to welcome the signing of the new Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Iraq covering the period 2026–2029, which marks an important milestone in our shared commitment to advancing decent work, social justice, and inclusive economic development.

This DWCP builds on the achievements of the previous DWCP 2019–2025 and reflects the collective vision and priorities of the Government of Iraq, employers' organizations, workers' organizations, and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The new DWCP is developed through extensive consultation and social dialogue of the tripartite constituents, and it provides a strategic framework for addressing key labour market challenges while promoting productive employment, social protection, rights at work, and effective social dialogue.

The DWCP is developed at a time of rapid economic, social, technological, and environmental change in the country and region, transitioning from humanitarian assistance to development. Hence, this DWCP serves as an important instrument for ensuring that economic growth translates into better opportunities and improved livelihoods for all women and men in Iraq. The DWCP aligns with National Development Plan (NDP) 2024–2028 priorities, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2025–2029, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth.

The Programme recognizes that sustainable development can only be achieved when workers' rights are respected, enterprises can thrive, and all people have access to opportunities, protection, and dignity in the workplace. Through strengthened partnerships and coordinated action, the DWCP will contribute to building more resilient labour markets, expanding social protection, promoting equality and inclusion, and supporting a just transition towards a sustainable future.

Finally, I would like to commend all tripartite constituents and development partners whose commitment and collaboration made this Programme possible. The ILO remains fully committed to supporting its implementation and to working alongside our partners to translate these shared priorities into tangible results for workers, employers, and communities in Iraq.

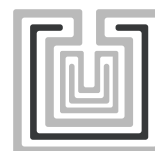
Together, we can advance decent work and social justice for all, leaving no one behind.

Ruba Jaradat
Regional Director for Arab States
International Labour Organization (ILO)



Ruba Jaradat

Regional Director
for Arab States



A Message of Thanks from the Ministry of Labour

It gives me great pleasure to present the new Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Iraq 2026–2029, a significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to promote inclusive economic growth, decent employment opportunities, social justice, and improved living standards for all people in Iraq.

The signing of this Programme reflects the longstanding tripartite partnership between the Government of Iraq, represented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, workers' and employers' organizations, and the International Labour Organization (ILO). It demonstrates our shared commitment to addressing labour market challenges and advancing policies that place people at the centre of development.

The DWCP 2026–2029 is aligned with our national development priorities and provides a strategic framework for strengthening employment creation, expanding social protection, enhancing labour rights, promoting occupational safety and health, and fostering effective social dialogue. It also contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to decent work, poverty reduction, gender equality, and social inclusion.

As Iraq continues to navigate economic, social, and environmental transformations, this Programme will support efforts to build a more resilient and productive workforce while ensuring that no one is left behind. Special attention will be given to increasing opportunities for young people, women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups to participate fully in economic and social life.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is committed to leading and coordinating the implementation of this Programme in close collaboration with workers' and employers' organizations. Through our collective efforts, we will strengthen labour market institutions, improve access to social protection, enhance compliance with labour standards, and support sustainable enterprises that create quality jobs.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the International Labour Organization, employers' and workers' organizations, development partners, and all those who contributed to the preparation of this Programme. Their dedication and constructive engagement have been instrumental in shaping a shared vision for the future of work in Iraq.

I am confident that the Decent Work Country Programme 2026–2029 will serve as an effective platform for advancing decent work, promoting social justice, and achieving sustainable and inclusive development for the benefit of all people in Iraq.

Mr. Khaled Al-Saigh
Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA)
Iraq



Khaled Al-Saigh

Deputy Minister of
Labour and Social
Affairs





Executive Agreement on Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Iraq 2026-2029

Iraq, September 2026

Whereas the Government of Iraq (represented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), the undersigned workers' and employers' organizations, and the International Labour Organization (ILO), represented by the International Labour Office (referred collectively as the Parties), wish to collaborate to promote and advance decent work in Iraq;

Whereas the Government, the undersigned workers' and employers' organizations and the ILO have adopted and implemented the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for Iraq for the period 2019-2023, and effectively extended it up until the end of 2025;

Whereas Article 40 of the Constitution of the ILO provides that the Organization shall enjoy in the territory of each of its Member States such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the fulfilment of its purposes; Recalling that the Government of Iraq has ratified nine of the ten fundamental Conventions, including the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) on 1 June 2018, as well as numerous governance and technical Conventions, including the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144) on 11 September 1978; the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) on 22 March 2023; and the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, as amended, on 22 March 2023;

Recalling that the ILO has been implementing development cooperation activities in Iraq since 1995;

Whereas the present Agreement establishes the framework under which the DWCP for 2026-2029 will be implemented;

Now therefore, the Parties hereby agree as follows:

1. The Parties affirm their commitment to collaborate in the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) for 2026-2029. The following are agreed as priorities of the DWCP:

- Improved Market-Relevant Skills and Inclusive Employment;
- Improved Job Creation through Economic Diversification, Business Growth, and Just Transition; and
- Improved Quality of Work and rights-based Social Protection.

2. The ILO agrees to assist in the mobilization of resources and to provide development cooperation in the implementation of the DWCP, subject to its rules, regulations, directives and procedures, the availability of funds and conditions to be agreed upon in writing.

3. In relation to the DWCP for 2026-2029 and to any related activities of the ILO in the country, the Government shall apply the provisions of the 1947 Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies and its Annex I, ratified by the Government on 9 July 1954, to the ILO, its property, funds and assets, its staff and any person designated by the ILO. In addition, the Government continues to exempt the ILO from taxes on goods, equipment, works and services used for official purposes as provided for in the 1947 Convention.

4. This Agreement may be modified by agreement between the Parties.

5. Nothing in or relating to this Agreement shall be construed as constituting a waiver of the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the ILO.

The DWCP document is attached to this Agreement. If the terms contained in the DWCP document are incompatible with the terms of this Agreement, including the provisions referenced in Article 3 above, then the latter shall govern and prevail.

The Parties agree that this Agreement may be signed either electronically or in handwritten form in four (4) originals. The Parties further agree that the electronic signatures appearing on or logically associated with this Agreement are equivalent to handwritten signatures for validity, enforceability and admissibility.

This Agreement, superseding all communications on this matter between the Parties, shall enter into force with effect from its signature by the authorized representatives of the Parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized representatives of the Parties, have signed this Agreement in English on the dates and at the places indicated below. If this Agreement is translated into another language, the English version shall govern and prevail.

For and on behalf of the Government

Khalid Amjad Al-Saigh

Deputy Minister of Labour and Social
Affairs

Baghdad, Iraq

3 September 2026

For and on behalf of the International Labour Office

Courteille-Mulder

ILO Deputy Regional Director

Baghdad, Iraq

3 September 2026

For and on behalf of employers' organizations

Adil Ikab

President of the Iraqi Federation of
Industries

Baghdad, Iraq

3 September 2026

For and on behalf of workers' organizations

Adnan Al-Saffar

Secretary of the Conference of Trade Union
Federations and Unions in Iraq

Baghdad, Iraq

3 September 2026



Al-Hadba Minaret (the leaning minaret) is one of the most iconic historical landmarks in Mosul and is part of the Al-Nuri Grand Mosque.

The mosque was built between 1172 and 1173 CE under the patronage of Nur al-Din Zangi. The minaret became known as “Al-Hadba,” meaning “the hunchback,” due to its distinctive lean, which developed over centuries and eventually became a defining symbol of Mosul.

Standing approximately 45 metres high, the minaret is renowned for its square base and intricate brickwork featuring geometric patterns that reflect the excellence of Zengid-era Islamic architecture.

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The traditional Iraqi head abaya, also known as the Baghdadi abaya, is one of Iraq's most distinctive forms of women's traditional dress.

Its origins are believed to date back to the Abbasid era (750–1258 CE), when women in Baghdad wore loose outer garments that reflected cultural values of modesty and social status. However, the modern style of the Iraqi head abaya evolved during the Ottoman period (1534–1917) and became firmly established as a key element of Iraqi women's attire by the nineteenth century.

Typically black or dark-coloured, the abaya is worn over the head and drapes gracefully over the body. It remains a powerful symbol of Iraqi cultural identity, elegance, and heritage, particularly in cities such as Baghdad, Najaf, Karbala, and Mosul.

1 Introduction

The International Labour Organization (ILO) launched Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs) in 2004 as time-bound initiatives grounded in ILO principles and standards. These programmes align with the priorities of ILO constituents, governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and reflect national development objectives. DWCPs outline the ILO's support needed to achieve measurable progress towards decent work for all, emphasizing the commitment of constituents to promote this goal both individually and collaboratively. Each country's DWCP provides a strategic framework aligned to the ILO's biennial programme and budget, aiming to create opportunities for women and men to secure decent work in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity. The Decent Work Agenda, which includes four key strategic objectives- employment, social security, social dialogue, and fundamental principles and rights at work- serves as the foundation for the ILO's efforts to support its members at the national level.

The ILO has had a longstanding programme of cooperation with its constituents in Iraq since 1932, when Iraq joined as a member state of the ILO. In 2019, the ILO and its tripartite constituents – the Government of Iraq, employers' and workers' organizations – marked a renewed commitment through the development of the DWCP (2019–2025), placing decent work at the core of Iraq's recovery and reform efforts. The ILO, with a country coordination office established in Baghdad in March 2020, has continued working closely with its tripartite constituents in both Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government to implement the DWCP (2019–2025), leveraging partnerships to achieve real change and align with national and international development goals.

The previous DWCP (2019–2025) focused on three priority areas:

- Supporting private sector development and job creation.
- Strengthening social protection and addressing child labour.
- Strengthening labour governance and social dialogue.

In the past five years of the implementation period of the previous DWCP, significant milestones have been achieved addressing pressing challenges faced by people in Iraq, particularly those affected by conflict, unemployment, and decent work deficits.

Building on the achievements and lessons learned from the previous DWCP, the tripartite constituents have identified three Strategic Priority areas in the new DWCP for 2026–2029, focusing on:

Strategic Priority 1: Improved market-relevant skills and inclusive employment.

Strategic Priority 2: Improved job creation through economic diversification, business growth, formalization, and just transition.

Strategic Priority 3: Improved quality of work and rights-based social protection.

As a time-bound cooperation framework for the ILO and its tripartite constituents in Iraq, the new DWCP provides the ILO's primary basis of accountability and guidance for cooperation at the country level to achieve the shared goal of decent work for all.

The new DWCP is fully aligned with Iraq's National Development Plan (2024–2028), particularly in its shared focus on inclusive economic development, skills enhancement, and improved labour market outcomes. Strategic Priority 1 of the DWCP corresponds with the NDP's objectives to strengthen vocational and technical education and training, foster employability among youth¹, women and persons with disabilities, and build a labour market system responsive to economic shifts. Strategic Priority 2 reflects the NDP's emphasis on diversifying the economy, supporting Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and increasing private sector participation through structural reforms and financial inclusion strategies. Strategic Priority 3 resonates with the NDP's commitment to strengthening labour governance, promoting social dialogue, and protecting vulnerable workers, particularly through institutional development and legal reforms.

The DWCP is congruent with the draft National Employment Policy (2024–2030), currently under endorsement by the Government of Iraq. It is also aligned with the Iraqi National Strategy to Prevent and

1. According to the definition of Iraq National Youth Strategy, the age group for youth is determined 15–29 years and this definition is used whenever the word youth is mentioned in this document.



and reduce Inequalities in the World of Work (2024–2028), which aims to address workplace inequalities and promote sustainable economic growth in Iraq.

The DWCP is also well-aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Iraq 2025-2029. Strategic Priority 1 of the new DWCP contributes to the UNSDCF Strategic Priority 1 on inclusive social development and Strategic Priority 3 on environment and climate change resilience. Strategic Priority 2 of the DWCP contributes to UNSDCF Strategic Priority 2 on sustainable economic development, livelihoods & employment, as well as Strategic Priority 3. Strategic Priority 3 of the DWCP directly supports UNSDCF Strategic Priority 1 and Strategic Priority 4 on good governance, rule of law, & human rights, especially in promoting decent work, rights at work, and protection for vulnerable populations. The ILO and constituents in the country contributed to drafting the UNSDCF, including the UN Common Country Analysis (CCA), which informs the framework.

With respect to the ILO's global policy frameworks, the DWCP aligns with the three pillars of the ILO Centenary Declaration for the Future of Work (2019)², and the ILO Strategic Plan 2022–2025 and 2026-2029. It also reflects ILO's Programme and Budget for 2024-2025.

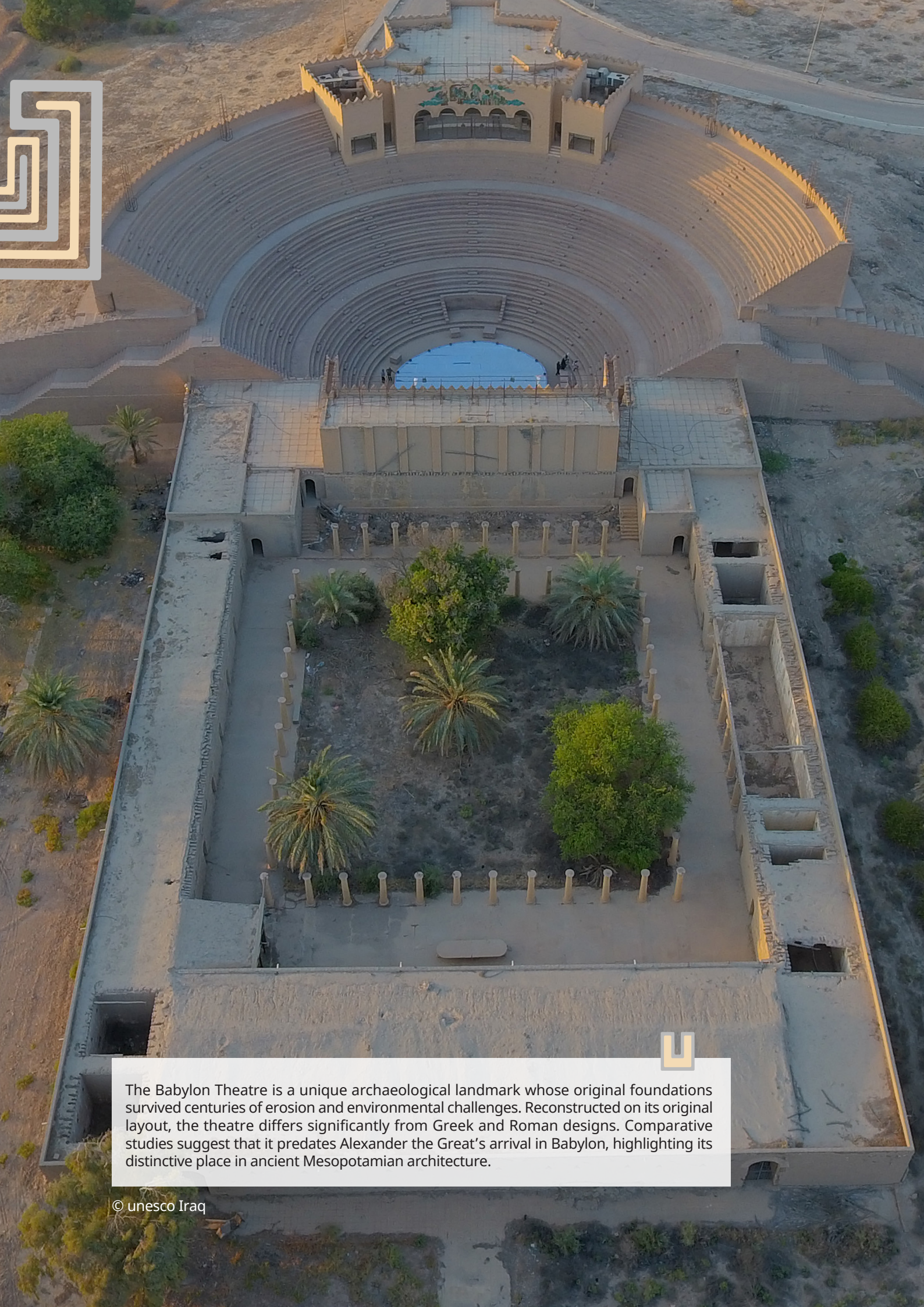
The formulation of the DWCP involved extensive engagement with tripartite constituents and other key government stakeholders. This includes a national tripartite consultation on 5–7 March 2024, as well as consultation with development partners, including UN agencies, on 18 July 2024 in Baghdad. A series of consultations was also held bilaterally with constituents, as well as with relevant government ministries and financial institutions with whom the ILO actively collaborates.



The Ziggurat (or Great Ziggurat) of Ur, meaning “house whose foundation creates terror” is a Neo-Sumerian ziggurat in what was the city of Ur near Nasiriyah, in present-day Dhi Qar Province, Iraq. The structure was built during the Early Bronze Age (21st century BC) by King Ur-Nammu of the Third Dynasty of Ur. It had crumbled to ruins by the 6th century BC of the Neo-Babylonian period, when it was restored by King Nabonidus.

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2. The three pillars are (1) increasing investment in people's capabilities, (2) increasing investment in the institutions of work, and (3) increasing investment in decent and sustainable work.



The Babylon Theatre is a unique archaeological landmark whose original foundations survived centuries of erosion and environmental challenges. Reconstructed on its original layout, the theatre differs significantly from Greek and Roman designs. Comparative studies suggest that it predates Alexander the Great's arrival in Babylon, highlighting its distinctive place in ancient Mesopotamian architecture.

2 Country progress towards decent work and sustainable development

2.1 Country diagnostic - context: challenges facing Iraq

Iraq continues to confront deep-seated structural and institutional challenges as it seeks to achieve stability and sustainable development. Persistent dependence on oil revenues, limited economic diversification, constrained private sector growth compounded by a failure to keep a pace with rapid technological development – factors continue to affect employment generation and productivity. These challenges are compounded by governance deficits, regional and political volatility, and increasing vulnerability to climate-related shocks.

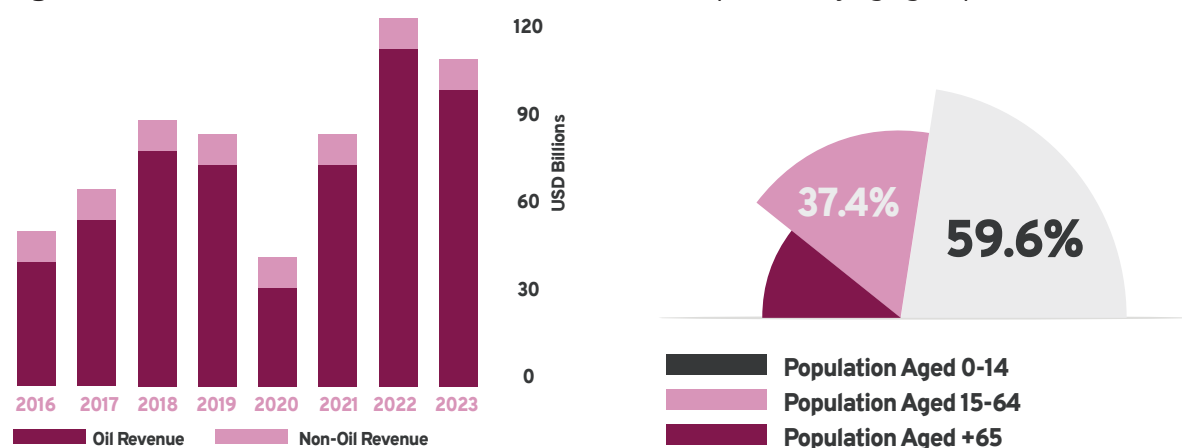
Notwithstanding these constraints, Iraq has registered notable progress in recent years following periods of conflict, insecurity, and the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reforms to labour legislation and social security systems, the gradual strengthening of labour market institutions, and targeted initiatives to promote youth and women's employment reflect a renewed national commitment to advancing decent work and inclusive growth. The principal constraints that continue to hinder the realization of decent work and sustainable development are outlined in the following subsections. However, Iraq's labour market remains characterized by deep structural imbalances, including a heavy reliance on public sector employment, particularly for women, widespread informality in the private sector, strong gender segmentation across economic sectors, and persistent decent work deficits affecting migrant and domestic workers, reflecting ongoing challenges in generating inclusive, productive, and rights-based employment opportunities³.



2.1.1 High dependence on oil and limited economic diversification

Iraq's economy is heavily reliant on oil exports, which account for more than 90 per cent of government revenue and over 40 per cent of GDP, making the country vulnerable to global oil price fluctuations⁴. The 2020 drop in oil prices led to significant revenue losses, increasing fiscal deficits and limiting government investments. Although oil revenues peaked in 2022, the volatility underscores the critical need for economic diversification⁵.

Figure 1: Government actual revenues (2016 – 2023) and Population by age group (2023)



In 2022, the agriculture sector contributed less than 3 per cent to Iraq's GDP, despite constituting 8.4 per cent of employment and being the main income source for about 75 per cent of farmers. These farmers⁶, mostly small-scale, face increasing costs of inputs and rely on traditional methods with minimal investment, leading to low productivity and poor integration into supply chains. Over the

3 ILO, CSO & KRSO. Iraq Labour Force Survey 2021. Baghdad/Geneva, 2022.

4. Republic of Iraq, National Development Plan 2024 – 2028, 2024

5. UNCT Iraq, Common Country Analysis, 2023

6. Extending social security to own-account workers and unpaid family workers in the agriculture sector in Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, ILO, 2025

past few decades, Iraq has shifted from being self-sufficient in food production to relying heavily on food imports due to factors such as sanctions, conflict, policy inefficiencies, extreme weather, water shortages, and competition from imports. The Da'esh crisis that began in 2014 further worsened the situation by displacing communities, damaging agricultural infrastructure, and restricting access to resources and markets, resulting in a 40 per cent decline in agricultural output. The sector employs over 725,000 workers (~150,000 women), with 96.7 per cent of them working informally⁷.

The construction sector remains one of Iraq's largest sources of private employment and a critical driver of post-conflict reconstruction and infrastructure renewal. It accounts for over 16 per cent of total employment and 1.4 million jobs, with its contribution to GDP fluctuating between 7.4 per cent in 2019 and 3 per cent in 2021 following the COVID-19 crisis and declines in oil revenue (CSO, KRSO and ILO, 2022⁸). Demand for housing, road networks, and public facilities continues to sustain high labour absorption, particularly among young men entering the labour market for the first time. However, job quality in construction remains a major concern. Over 98 per cent of employees work without social security coverage, and informality is nearly universal – 99 per cent of construction wage jobs in Federal Iraq and 86 per cent in the Kurdistan Region are in informal firms, most of them micro-enterprises employing fewer than five workers. Two out of three employees in Federal Iraq are hired on a casual basis, often without written contracts, and average monthly wages barely exceed the statutory minimum. The predominance of short-term or daily arrangements exposes workers to high risks of income volatility, non-payment, and exclusion from occupational safety and health protections. The sector's fragmentation – ranging from large formal contractors to informal local subcontractors – complicates enforcement of labour standards and registration with social security.

Manufacturing in Iraq has faced significant challenges over the years, largely due to political events and wars, which have depleted human and material resources and led to the temporary closure of key industrial facilities. The Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) contribution to Iraq's GDP has declined from 2.3 per cent in 2013 to 1.79 per cent in 2022, far below the MENA region average of 13 per cent. The CCA warns that this trend could lead to premature deindustrialization, jeopardizing Iraq's long-term economic sustainability. Additionally, the industrial sector's share of total employment has dropped from 10.6 per cent in 2000 to 8.6 per cent in 2022, which is below the average of 11.3 per cent observed in other middle-income industrializing countries. The gap between the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP and its share of total employment points to weak productivity. This limited productivity is further mirrored in low wage levels, with 52 per cent of manufacturing workers earning low pay⁹.

The service economy in the private sector has become Iraq's fastest-expanding source of employment, reflecting urbanization, diversification away from oil, and new forms of digital and care work. Services encompass a wide spectrum – from retail, transport, and hospitality to health, education, and domestic work – and employ a growing share of women, particularly in social and personal services. Yet, most of this employment remains informal, low paid, and unprotected.

With Iraq's rentier economy's excessive reliance on oil and expanding young population, the urgency of the challenge is clear. As the latest CCA shows, "By 2030, adolescents and youth are projected to constitute a substantial 31 per cent of the population, numbering approximately 16.4 million individuals. Such a demographic bulge signifies a vibrant, young workforce in the near future, but it also underscores the mounting pressures on the nation's resources, infrastructure, and employment sectors".

2.1.2 High unemployment and underemployment

Unemployment and underemployment continue to be significant challenges in Iraq, particularly among youth and women. More recent data, according to Iraq's Household Socioeconomic Survey (IHSES III) 2023/2024, the unemployment rate stands at 13.5 per cent, while labour force participation remains persistently low at 38 per cent. The survey also indicates that women's labour force participation is among the lowest in the world, at 13.6 per cent. Youth unemployment rate is alarmingly high at 35.4 per cent, compared to 11.2 per cent for adults, while women's labour force participation is extremely low at 10.6 per

7. UNCT Iraq, Common Country Analysis, 2023

8. Central Statistical Organization and International Labour Organisation, 2022 and Kurdistan Region Statistics Office and International Labour Organization, Labour Force Survey 2021, 2022.

9. Extending social security to own-account workers and unpaid family workers in the agriculture sector in Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, ILO, 2025

cent versus 68 per cent for men¹⁰. These figures highlight broader labour market issues, such as insufficient job creation outside the oil sector and barriers to women's employment.

Unemployment rates in Iraq vary significantly by age, gender, location, and governorate. Youth unemployment, at 35.8 per cent, is more than three times the adult rate. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) reports that women's unemployment is 28.2 per cent, almost double the male unemployment rate of 14.7 per cent. Among Iraq's governorates, Nineveh has the highest unemployment rate at 32.8 per cent, followed by Al-Muthanna at 27.3 per cent and Thi Qar at 25.8 per cent¹¹.

Iraqi women who do participate in the labour market are often underemployed or work part-time. Young women face particularly tough challenges, with 52.3 per cent of young women not engaged in education, employment, or training in 2021, compared to 22.1 per cent of young men. Additionally, nearly 27 per cent of internally displaced persons (IDPs) are unemployed, with women and children, 49 per cent of whom are under 18, being the most vulnerable within this group¹². These figures highlight persistent barriers to inclusive growth and the need for systemic reforms to promote decent work opportunities, particularly for youth and women.



2.1.3 Deficits of decent work

Approximately two-thirds of Iraq's active workforce, or around 5.73 million people, are estimated to be informally employed. High informality continues to dilute the quality of work. For example, workers may lack written contracts, social security, and OSH protections. In some sectors, such as the construction or manufacturing sectors, from 98 to 100 per cent of the workforce is informal¹³. In the agricultural sector 94 to 97 per cent of the workforce is informal. In almost every governorate, except for Dhi Qar, more than half of the non-agricultural workforce works in informal jobs. According to the CCA, this widespread informal employment is marked by a lack of social protection, job security, and benefits. The governorates of Erbil and Nineveh have particularly elevated levels of informal employment, posing a significant obstacle to achieving decent work¹⁴. A pragmatic pathway from informality to formality – combining guided compliance for micro-firms, tailored inspection, and incentives linked to access to finance/markets – can raise job quality while broadening the contribution base for social security and inspection services.

The passage of the Pension and Social Security Law No. 18 in 2023 created an opportunity to widen coverage and improve adequacy – central to decent working conditions. Practical challenges remain in simplifying contribution procedures, bringing small firms and non-standard workers into the system, ensuring that larger businesses register all their workforce, and implementing access to short- and long-term benefits, including for persons with disabilities (PWD). Phased expansion, easy-to-comply contribution options, and employer outreach will strengthen effective coverage while supporting enterprise formalization.

Minimum-wage policy provides an important floor (IQD 350,000 per month in Federal Iraq), but many workers – especially in informal or low-productivity segments – still earn near that threshold, and pay dispersion is marked by gender gaps. ILO country data indicate the statutory floor and point to an 18.4% hourly gender wage gap, underlining the need for pay-equity measures, better job classification, and stronger wage-setting and compliance practices in smaller firms. Priority actions include improving wage-payment regularity, enhancing transparency of pay scales, and promoting social dialogue on wage adjustments in line with productivity and living-cost considerations.

The legal base for OSH (Labour Law 2015 and OSH Requirements Instructions No. 12/2016) is in place, and inspection capacity has been expanding. Still, prevention systems are uneven – particularly in agriculture, construction, small workshops, and among micro-enterprises – with under-reporting of accidents and limited workplace risk management. Next steps include consolidating a risk-based national OSH programme, improving notification and recording of injuries, sector-specific guidance (e.g., construction), and continuous training for inspectors and bipartite safety committees.

Regarding industrial relations, tripartite engagement around a new draft trade-union law has been a positive development, although ensuring that the final text fully reflects international standards and facilitates inclusive, representative bargaining across sectors and enterprise sizes will remain critical. Strengthening dispute-prevention and mediation services, encouraging collective agreements in priority

10. Central Statistical Organization, Kurdistan Region Statistics Office and International Labour Organization, Labour Force Survey 2021, 2022.

11. Idem.

12. UNCT, Iraq Common Country Analysis, 2023

13. Extending social security to own-account workers and unpaid family workers in the agriculture sector in Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, ILO, 2025; Extending social security to wage workers in the manufacturing sector in Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, ILO, 2025; Extending social security to casual workers in the construction sector in Federal Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, ILO, 2025

14. UNCT Iraq, Common Country Analysis, 2023



sectors, and building employers' and unions' capacities will help translate legal rights into better day-to-day working conditions.

Progress on fundamental principles and rights at work remains essential to sustained improvements in job quality. Continued alignment of legislation and practice with the ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87) and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) will reinforce free and independent workers' and employers' organizations and foster meaningful collective bargaining. Likewise, strengthened implementation of standards on the elimination of forced labour (Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105) and Discrimination (employment and occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) is critical to ensuring that all forms of work are freely chosen and fairly rewarded. Efforts to eliminate child labour (Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) require integrated prevention measures – linking social protection, school retention, safe transport, and local case management – recognizing that risks rise during income shocks and displacement. Equal opportunity and non-discrimination principles should be mainstreamed across recruitment, pay systems, and workplace practices, so that every worker in Iraq can benefit from decent and dignified employment.

In general, Iraq is grappling with ensuring adequate protection for all workers due to weak institutional capacity and enforcement of labour laws. Although frameworks like the Labour Law No. 37 of 2015 and the new Social Security Law No. 18 of 2023 exist, their implementation is limited by under-resourced labour inspection systems, insufficient coordination among government agencies, and widespread informality, where most workers remain outside formal contracts or social protection coverage. Trade union rights and collective bargaining remain constrained by obsolete laws and political interference, while occupational safety and health (OSH) standards are inconsistently applied, particularly in high-risk and informal sectors such as construction and agriculture. Vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and displaced persons, face discrimination and limited access to protection mechanisms. Despite these weaknesses, progress has been made through recent reforms such as expanding social security coverage, launching national OSH and labour inspection policies, and drafting a new trade union law aligned with international labour standards. However, Iraq still needs stronger enforcement, broader inclusion of informal workers, better institutional coordination, and greater awareness of worker rights to achieve decent work and full labour protection for all.

2.1.4 Education and human capital development

Iraq possesses a strong foundation for human capital development, with a long-standing tradition of higher education and a solid base of technical expertise. Tertiary enrolment has expanded in recent years, and the country ranked 66th globally in the higher-education component of the 2021 Global Knowledge Index. A significant share of Iraq's academic research output is concentrated in engineering and technology disciplines, reflecting a resilient and capable cadre of graduates with the potential to drive innovation and knowledge-based growth.

At the same time, Iraq stands at a pivotal demographic moment. As an ILO report shows, the country is experiencing a demographic window of opportunity marked by a large and growing working-age population and declining dependency ratios¹⁵. Harnessing this demographic dividend will depend on the country's capacity to invest in education, skills, and employment systems that can translate population growth into sustained productivity gains and inclusive development.

Yet, despite these advantages, Iraq's education and training systems continue to face deep structural challenges. Decades of conflict, underinvestment, and institutional fragmentation have weakened the quality and relevance of learning at all levels. While enrolment in basic education has improved, significant regional and gender disparities persist, and high dropout rates undermine overall attainment. This educational gap is worsened by factors such as child marriage and gender disparities in access to education. Data from 2019-2020 shows that while 90 percent of children are enrolled in primary education, this figure drops sharply in secondary education to 46 percent for boys and 52 percent for girls and just 18 percent for higher education. These discrepancies in enrolment rates across different educational stages indicate a structural imbalance that urgently needs to be addressed¹⁶. There is a notable gender disparity in school dropout, with girls generally more likely to leave school before completing primary and lower-secondary levels a pattern that contributes to higher illiteracy rates among women (around 23 per cent) compared to men (around 14 per cent) in Iraq¹⁷. UNICEF

15. Generation 2050: Turning Iraq's Demographic "Gift" into an Economic Window of Opportunity, ILO, 2022

16. UNCT Iraq, Common Country Analysis, 2023

17. UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). Literacy rate, adult population (15+), by sex – Iraq, latest available year; Government of Iraq, Ministry of Planning.

and other sources indicate that girls tend to drop out more at all levels of education as compared to boys. This disparity reflects a combination of social, economic, and cultural factors, including early marriage, household responsibilities, safety concerns, and limited access to school facilities, which disproportionately affect women's labour force participation. These challenges contribute directly to Iraq's persistently low women and youth labour force participation rates. Many young people – especially women – leave school without employable skills or face barriers transitioning into work, reinforcing dependence, discouragement, and informality rather than productive engagement in the economy. The technical and vocational education and training (TVET) system remains under-resourced and insufficiently linked to employers, particularly in growth sectors such as renewable energy, digital services, and care. This has further exacerbated the skills mismatch and limited opportunities for young Iraqis and women to access decent work. As of 2019/2020, post-primary only around 52,000 TVET students (13,769 women) enrolled in 316 vocational schools, resulting in a gross enrolment ratio of just 2.1 percent. However, by 2020/2021, enrolment had doubled to about 108,000 students (24,712 women) across 322 schools, increasing the gross enrolment ratio to 4.3 percent. Despite this considerable progress, Iraq still struggles to align technical and vocational education and training with market needs and the aspirations of its youth. This gap is attributed to societal attitudes toward TVET and the limited availability and reach of TVET institutions. Enhancing educational outcomes remains crucial for building human capital and driving economic development¹⁸.

Access to education and skills development is even more constrained for vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees, migrant workers, and persons with disabilities (PWDs). Displacement, damaged infrastructure, documentation barriers, and stigma continue to disrupt learning and restrict participation in training and employment. Refugees and migrant workers—particularly those in low-skilled and domestic occupations face additional legal and economic barriers to education and skills upgrading. For many PWDs, inaccessible facilities and limited assistive resources further constrain their opportunities. Addressing these inequities through inclusive and targeted education and training policies will be essential to ensure that all population groups can contribute to and benefit from Iraq's human capital development. Actionable policy and targeted programmes are required to resolve the above-mentioned structural, economic and social barriers to enhance equitable human capital development and labour force participation.



2.1.5 Weak private sector

Iraq's private sector is underdeveloped, with the economy largely dominated by public sector employment. Micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) employ many workers; however, they are mostly informal. This underdevelopment is exacerbated by the absence of a strong legal framework and limited access to financial services, which further impede private sector growth and investment.

The private sector, particularly MSMEs, plays a minimal role in an economy dominated by large state-owned enterprises. According to the 2023 CCA, the Iraqi public sector is the largest formal employer, providing nearly 4.1 million jobs, with 62.5 percent of employed women and 34.2 percent of employed men working in this sector. The government's payroll expenses are exceptionally high, reaching an estimated 24 percent of GDP in 2020, one of the highest globally, which contributed to a budget deficit of around 20 percent of GDP that same year.

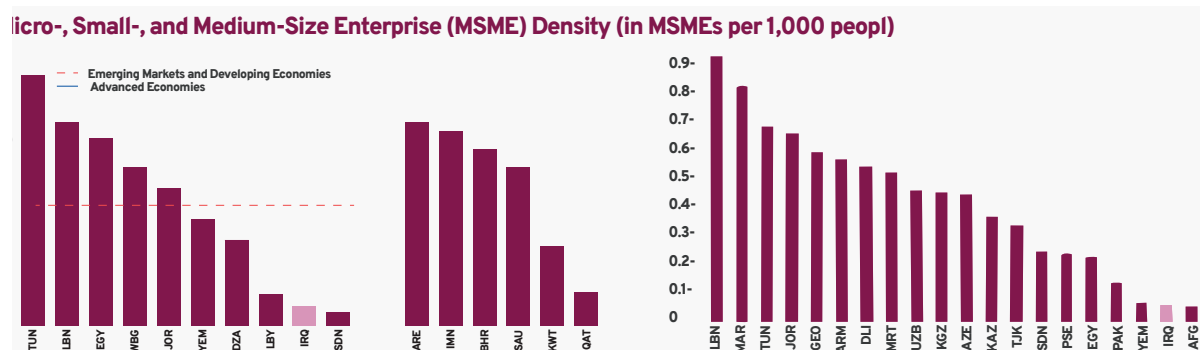
Enterprises are overwhelmingly led by men, with women representing a very small share of business ownership and management. Only about 7 % of firms have women participating in ownership, and roughly 2 % of enterprises have a woman as the top manager, highlighting the severe gender imbalance in formal entrepreneurship. Household and informal enterprises show slightly higher women's participation, with approximately 11 % primarily operated by women, who are typically concentrated in trade, manufacturing, and agriculture, while rarely entering sectors like transportation and communication¹⁹. Women-led enterprises are generally smaller, employ fewer workers, and tend to hire other women, whereas male-led businesses dominate both in size and sectoral reach. Despite efforts such as online business registration portals, women remain underrepresented, reflecting structural, legal, and cultural barriers that limit their access to finance, formal registration, and leadership roles. Overall, women's entrepreneurial participation

18. UNCT Iraq, Common Country Analysis, 2023

19. Self-employment with a Poverty Focus-Improving the livelihoods of Iraqi Women, World Bank, 2022.

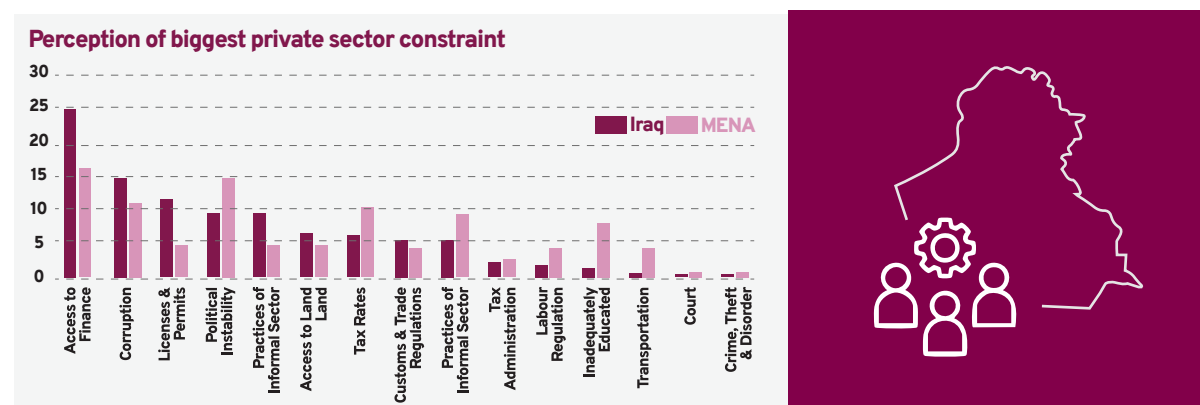
in Iraq is limited, and enterprises led by women remain a small fraction of the total, primarily concentrated in micro-scale or household-level operations.

► **Figure 2:** MSME Density (in MSMEs per 1,000 people) and SME Financial Inclusion Index (on a scale of 0 to 1)



The main challenges facing Iraq's business environment include difficulties in securing financing, navigating corruption, obtaining business licenses and permits, coping with political instability, ensuring reliable electricity, acquiring land, managing tax rates, dealing with informal economy practices, complying with customs and trade regulations, and handling tax administration.

► **Figure 3:** Top ten business environment constraints in Iraq vs. MENA (World Bank, Enterprise Survey, 2022²⁰)



2.1.6 Social and environmental challenges

Iraq faces numerous social and environmental challenges, including the impacts of climate change, water scarcity, and environmental degradation. Intense heatwaves, often exceeding 50°C, are becoming increasingly regular, coupled with water scarcity, desertification, flooding and pollution, which have resulted in significant and uneven impact across different occupational sectors. In agriculture and fisheries, droughts and declining water levels in the Tigris and Euphrates reduce crop yields and fish stocks, threatening the livelihoods of farmers and fishers. Construction and outdoor workers are facing increased health risks and reduced productivity due to extreme heat and sandstorms, while floods and erosion can damage infrastructure projects. The energy and oil sectors are experiencing operational disruptions from dust storms, heat, and water contamination. Informal and low-skilled workers, such as daily labourers and street vendors, are highly exposed to climate hazards with limited protections, exacerbating poverty and inequality. Public health and emergency services are strained by pollution-related illnesses and extreme weather events, increasing absenteeism and workload. Overall, climate and environmental stressors



amplify sectoral vulnerabilities, disproportionately affecting the most exposed and marginalized workers, highlighting the urgent need for climate-resilient employment policies and social protection measures. On the other hand, Iraq is fighting against social inequalities, rooted in decades of conflict, fragility, and uneven development across governorates.

According to the Iraq Household Socio-Economic Survey (IHSES III, 2024), the national poverty rate declined to 17.5 per cent, down from 20.5 per cent in 2018, while the Gini coefficient improved slightly to 29.8 (from 30.4 in 2018), signalling modest progress in income equality. However, regional and social disparities remain pronounced: average household consumption in Baghdad is nearly twice that of southern governorates, and multidimensional poverty still affects 10.8 per cent of the population (UNDP, 2024). Gender inequality persists, with women's labour-force participation at 10.8 per cent compared with 68 per cent for men, and women earning on average 18 per cent less than men with similar qualifications (World Bank, 2024).

Vulnerable groups – including internally displaced persons, refugees, and persons with disabilities – face systemic exclusion from education, training, and formal employment. Persistent income and spatial inequalities, compounded by gender, climatic, and governance challenges, continue to limit equitable growth and the realization of decent work for all.

Inadequate and uneven access to enabling infrastructure continues to constrain women's participation in the labour market in Iraq. Limited availability of safe, affordable, and reliable public transport, particularly in secondary cities and rural areas, restricts women's mobility and access to workplaces, training centres, and markets. Gaps in childcare, eldercare, and accessible healthcare services increase unpaid care burdens on women, reducing their ability to seek and sustain employment, especially in the private sector. In addition, deficiencies in workplace and public infrastructure, including the lack of gender-responsive facilities such as separate and safe sanitation facilities for women, further discourage women's entry into certain sectors and occupations. These infrastructure and service gaps disproportionately affect women, persons with disabilities, and displaced populations, reinforcing gender segmentation, informality, and exclusion from decent work opportunities²¹.



2.1.7 Ratification and Application of International Labour Standards

Iraq joined the ILO in 1932 and has ratified 72 ILO conventions, including 9 of the 10 fundamental conventions. Notably, the Occupational Safety and Health Convention (No. 155) remains unratified, presenting a gap in Iraq's fundamental labour standards commitments. (Refer to Annex 3 for Iraq's ILS ratification status)

Despite substantial ratification efforts, the ILO's supervisory bodies, particularly the Committee of Experts (CEACR), have highlighted implementation gaps in several key areas:

- **Freedom of Association (C.87):** While ratified, the obsolete Trade Union Act (1987) continues to restrict trade union freedoms, particularly in the public sector. CEACR urges rapid adoption of a new union law aligned with international standards.
- **Collective Bargaining (C.98):** Effective collective bargaining remains limited due to the lack of enabling legislation for public-sector workers and restrictive frameworks in the private sector. Strengthening collective negotiation mechanisms is recommended.
- **Forced Labour (C.29 & C.105):** Although legally prohibited, forced labour remains a concern, particularly in contexts of human trafficking and conflict. CEACR calls for stronger legal frameworks and enforcement against all perpetrators, including private actors.
- **Child Labour (C.138 & C.182):** Despite legal reforms, child labour persists, particularly in informal and conflict-affected settings. CEACR recommends increased enforcement and social support measures for vulnerable families, alongside targeted actions to eliminate worst forms like recruitment by armed groups.
- **Equal Remuneration and Discrimination (C.100 & C.111):** Gender disparities in employment remain pronounced, with low women workforce participation and persistent wage inequalities. CEACR suggests strengthening legal definitions, establishing pay-equity measures, and proactive policies to combat workplace discrimination.
- **Occupational Safety and Health (C.155):** Iraq's lack of ratification and comprehensive OSH legislation results in significant occupational hazards, notably in construction and oil industries. ILO strongly recommends ratifying Convention 155 and implementing a national OSH policy and law.

Overall, Iraq demonstrates a positive trend toward aligning national policies with international labour standards, but substantial challenges remain in translating legal commitments into effective practices. Through continued ILO technical support within the DWCP framework—such as legislative assistance, capacity-building, and promoting tripartite dialogue—Iraq can address these gaps, ensuring better compliance with international labour standards and advancing decent work for all.

²¹ Sources: UNCT, Common Country Analysis – Iraq (2023); UNDP, Iraq Gender Equality Strategy (2022–2025); ILO analytical work on care economy and gender-responsive infrastructure.



2.1.8 Status of social dialogue

In Iraq, social dialogue mechanisms remain nascent but are progressively strengthening, driven by ongoing ILO support and increasing government commitment. The representational strength and institutional capacities of the social partners—the government (mainly the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs), workers' organizations, and employers' associations—are gradually improving, yet significant gaps persist.

Social dialogue, historically limited due to restrictive legislation and institutional weaknesses, has recently seen renewed momentum. The government has increasingly recognized the importance of tripartite dialogue, as reflected in recent consultations around labour law reforms and social protection initiatives. However, meaningful dialogue remains constrained by obsolete legislation, notably the restrictive Trade Union Act (1987), which limits worker representation, particularly in the public sector.

Workers' organizations in Iraq face considerable challenges, including limited organizational capacity, fragmentation, and historical governmental control. Union freedoms in the private sector have improved following the Labour Law (2015), but many unions remain weak in terms of financial resources, management capabilities, and technical expertise. The public sector still lacks a supportive legislative framework for free union formation, affecting overall representational strength. In this context, women's representation within social dialogue structures appears limited and is not systematically documented through sex-disaggregated reporting, making it difficult to assess the extent to which tripartite processes are inclusive of women's perspectives²².

Employers' organizations have similarly faced capacity challenges, often lacking cohesion and sufficient representational coverage of the broader private sector, especially SMEs and informal enterprises. However, recent efforts supported by the ILO have contributed to institutional development, improving the employers' ability to engage meaningfully in policy discussions. At the thematic level, gender equality issues have featured in specific reform-related consultations, notably in tripartite discussions linked to social protection reforms, maternity protection, and barriers related to discrimination. However, available evidence does not indicate that a broader range of gender equality priorities—such as equal pay, workplace discrimination, violence and harassment at work, women's leadership and empowerment, or the rights of domestic and other vulnerable workers—are consistently and systematically addressed through regular social dialogue agendas, pointing to an important gap in advancing more gender-responsive social dialogue²³.

Regarding national readiness to implement, monitor, and evaluate the new DWCP, Iraq demonstrates growing commitment at the governmental and institutional levels. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA), despite resource constraints, is increasingly aligning national policies with ILO recommendations and standards. Yet significant challenges remain, particularly around institutional coordination, monitoring capacities, and data availability. MOLSA's technical capacity to manage and monitor complex programmes like DWCP requires further strengthening, which is an area already receiving targeted ILO assistance.

In summary, while Iraq's current state of social dialogue and institutional readiness still face notable constraints, ongoing legislative reforms, capacity-building initiatives, and strengthened ILO collaboration are laying foundations to enhance effective implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the upcoming DWCP. The ILO's support and investment have continued in capacity-building, legal reform, and social partner empowerment remain essential to sustain and deepen these gains.



2.1.9 Women and disability inclusion

Women and persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Iraq face intersecting and persistent barriers to accessing decent work, contributing to their systematic exclusion from labour market opportunities. Women labour force participation remains among the lowest globally, at approximately 10–11 per cent²⁴, while women experience significantly higher unemployment, underemployment, informality, and wage gaps compared to men²⁵. Structural factors—including prevailing social norms and unpaid care responsibilities²⁶, limited access to market-relevant skills, and weak labour intermediation systems²⁷—continue to constrain

22 ILO; UNCT. Common Country Analysis: Iraq, 2023.

23 ILO, ROAS. Social Protection Reform and Tripartite Dialogue in Iraq, programme documentation.

24 International Labour Organization (ILO), Central Statistical Organization (CSO) and Kurdistan Region Statistics Office (KRSO). Iraq Labour Force Survey 2021. Baghdad/Geneva, 2022.

25 International Labour Organization (ILO). ILOSTAT Country Profile: Iraq. Geneva.

26 United Nations Country Team (UNCT). Common Country Analysis: Iraq. 2023.

27 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Iraq Gender Equality Strategy 2022–2025. 2022.



women's economic participation, particularly among young women, rural women, and women affected by displacement.

Persons with disabilities face additional and often more severe barriers to labour market inclusion, notably due to inaccessible infrastructure and workplaces²⁸, limited availability of inclusive employment services and skills development pathways²⁹, employer discrimination, and weak enforcement of disability-inclusive labour legislation. Women with disabilities face compounded disadvantages, reflected in extremely low employment rates and restricted access to social protection and active labour market programmes. While recent policy reforms, including the expansion of social security coverage under the Pension and Social Security Law No. 18 (2023)³⁰, represent important progress, implementation gaps, limited institutional capacity, and insufficiently disaggregated labour market data continue to constrain effective inclusion. Addressing these challenges requires coherent, gender- and disability-responsive labour market policies, inclusive employment services, strengthened enforcement of non-discrimination provisions, and targeted measures to improve access to skills development, formal employment, and social protection.

2.2 Recommendations from the UN common country analysis (CCA) 2023

The UN Common Country Analysis 2023 provides several recommendations to address Iraq's multifaceted challenges:

1. Economic Diversification: Reduce dependency on oil by expanding into sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, and services to create jobs and enhance economic stability.
2. Support for MSMEs: Strengthen the micro, small, and medium enterprise sectors by improving legal, financial, and infrastructural support.
3. Renewable Energy: Transition towards renewable energy sources to reduce reliance on oil and promote environmental sustainability.
4. Fiscal Reforms: Implement comprehensive fiscal reforms to manage oil revenues efficiently and stabilize the economy.
5. Women Empowerment and Equality: Promote women empowerment and equality in the workforce through policies that support equal opportunities and provide support for women in the labour market.
6. Poverty Alleviation: Focus on targeted poverty alleviation programmes, especially for women and vulnerable groups.
7. Infrastructure Investment: Invest in water, sanitation, and urban development to improve public health and living conditions.
8. Governance Reforms: Implement transparent and inclusive structural reforms to enhance governance and rebuild public trust.³¹

2.3 Iraq's progress towards decent work (DWCP 2019 – 2025)

The ILO has maintained a long-standing cooperative Programme with its constituents in Iraq since 1995. ILO opened its first Iraq country coordination office in Baghdad in March 2020. The 2019-2025 DWCP represents a renewed, in-depth engagement of the ILO in Iraq, solidifying a strong commitment among all partners to place Decent Work at the core of Iraq's recovery and reform efforts. In implementing the 2019 – 2025 DWCP, the ILO worked closely with both the Federal Iraq and Kurdistan Regional Governments. The ILO's approach in Iraq is to leverage partnerships to achieve real change and to more closely align to both

28 United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA). Gender Justice Country Profile: Iraq.

29 International Labour Organization (ILO). Disability Inclusion in the World of Work: Evidence from the Middle East and North Africa. Geneva.

30 Government of Iraq. Pension and Social Security Law No. 18 of 2023; ILO technical briefs on social protection reform.

31 UNCT Iraq, Common Country Analysis, 2023

national and international development goals. Activities and results identified in the DWCP are predicated on clear theories of change, developed in consultation with Iraqi constituents³².

The DWCP 2019–2025 had three areas of priority:

- Supporting private sector development and job creation.
- Strengthening social protection and addressing child labour.
- Strengthening labour governance and social dialogue.

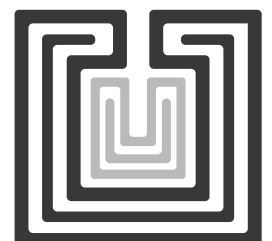


2.3.1 Achievements

The ILO has made several significant achievements in Iraq, including:

1. **Beneficiary Support:** Assisted over 20,000 individuals—women, men, girls, and boys—through job opportunities, skills training, entrepreneurship development, access to finance, social protection, addressing child labour, and improving labour governance.
2. **Research and Publications:** Produced more than 40 studies, assessments, and reports, including the National Labour Force Survey (LFS) and informality diagnostic reports.
3. **Convention Ratification:** Facilitated the ratification of ILO Conventions No.102, No.184, No.185, and the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) 2006.
4. **Legislative Adoption:** Supported the adoption of a new Pension and Social Security Law for Private Sector Workers in Federal Iraq.
5. **Policy Endorsement:** Secured the endorsement and publication of Labour Inspection and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) policies.
6. **Strategy Formulation:** Developed the “Iraq National Strategy to Prevent and Reduce Inequalities in the World of Work for 2024-2028.”
7. **Programme Operationalization:** Implemented the ILO’s Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP).
8. **Business Management Tools:** Institutionalized ILO business management tools (SIYB, FE, KAB Programmes) within government entities, NGOs, BDS providers, and UN agencies to support young entrepreneurs, especially women and youth from displaced, refugee, and host communities.
9. **Financial Inclusion:** Collaborated with the Central Bank of Iraq and other stakeholders to develop a Financial Inclusion Strategy/Initiative to provide services and loans to young entrepreneurs across Iraq.
10. **Child Labour Monitoring:** Institutionalized the Child Labour Monitoring System (CLMS) and Child Labour Standards.
11. **Educational Initiatives:** Established Child Friendly Learning Spaces (CFLS).
12. **OSH Reinforcement:** Strengthened the National Centre for Occupational Safety and Health (NCOSH).
13. **Labour Inspection Training:** Established a national labour inspection training centre within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA).
14. **Women’s Employment and Inclusion:** Expanded women’s access to employment, skills development, entrepreneurship support, and income-generating opportunities through targeted ILO programmes, including business management training (SIYB/KAB), employment services strengthening, and inclusive labour market initiatives benefiting women from displaced, refugee, and host communities.

32 ILO, Decent Work Country Programme, Iraq: Recovery and Reform 2019 – 2025.





2.3.2 Lessons learned

Summary of the lessons learned from implementing the DWCP include:

General lessons learned

- **Building trust** and empowering people are essential for success.
- **Begin with small initiatives** to demonstrate relevant expertise, before leveraging to take on larger roles.
- **Addressing climate change** and its impact on the world of work is critical and requires expertise and action.
- **The ILO's business management training tools** (SIYB, FE, KAB) have been successful in promoting entrepreneurship and MSME development.
- **Gender-responsive and inclusive programme design is critical**, as targeted measures are required to address persistent structural barriers limiting women's and other marginalized groups' access to decent work.

Management & Governance

- **Risk management** through conducting regular risk analysis, implementing mitigation strategies, and maintaining close collaboration with government counterparts is crucial for overcoming challenges.
- **Ongoing coordination with government agencies**, UN bodies, and security forces is vital for adaptive planning that considers accessibility and security conditions.
- **A comprehensive approach** that combines grassroots interventions with policy-level discussions effectively addresses labour market issues and decent work challenges.

Institutional development

- **Active participation of tripartite constituents in policy development** has been key to the successful endorsement of various policies and legal reforms.
- **Joint capacity building opportunities** are instrumental in bridging the gaps between government organizations with overlapping mandates.
- **To effectively close the gap between laws and their implementation**, it's crucial to identify challenges, develop solutions, and institutionalize efficient processes that address these challenges and are responsive to both workers and employers.
- **Integrating Training of Trainers (ToT)** activities into many development cooperation projects has enhanced the sustainability of outcomes and support future capacity-building efforts through the utilization of trained graduates.
- **Institutional capacity-building that integrates gender and inclusion considerations improves implementation outcomes**, particularly when government institutions are supported to apply gender-responsive planning, data disaggregation, and inclusive service design.

Representation and Social Dialogue

- **Strategic thinking** is necessary to foster effective social dialogue among the tripartite constituents, which is key to achieving the Decent Work Agenda.
- **Enhancing social dialogue** and labour inspections requires stronger and more inclusive representation of both worker and employer voices, including women, migrant workers, and persons with disabilities, whose perspectives are often underrepresented in existing dialogue and oversight mechanisms.
- **Improved representation** can be achieved through the freedom of association and more effective outreach, considering the evolving nature of work.

These lessons learned, among others, were taken into consideration while developing the new DWCP (2026 – 2029).³³

Table 1: Summary of lessons learned from previous DWCP

Area	What worked	What did not work	How this informs the new DWCP (2026–2029)
Labour governance & institutions	Progress in labour inspection capacity-building; adoption of updated OSH tools; greater engagement from MOLSA and the tripartite partners.	Limited digitalization; slow follow-up to supervisory body comments; uneven inspection coverage outside major cities.	New DWCP emphasizes modernization of labour administration, digital inspection systems, strengthened compliance mechanisms, and structured follow-up to ILS obligations.
Employment services & skills development	Successful piloting of employment service centre (ESC) improvements; demand-driven training partnerships increased job placements.	Fragmented coordination between ESCs and TVET institutions; obsolete labour market information systems.	New DWCP prioritizes ESC digital systems, integrated LMI, and closer ESC–TVET collaboration for market-relevant skills provision.
Private sector development & MSMEs	Growth of entrepreneurship programmes, especially for youth and women; improved business advisory services.	Limited scale-up due to insufficient financing; weak policy environment for MSME formalization.	DWCP incorporates stronger links to finance providers, MSME policy reform, formalization pathways, and support for enterprise resilience and diversification.
Social protection	Incremental improvements in administrative systems and outreach; strengthened social assistance targeting.	Fragmented social protection landscape; limited coverage for informal workers; absence of interoperable databases.	New DWCP focuses on lifecycle social protection, systems integration, digitalization, and expanding coverage to informal workers.
Social dialogue & tripartism	Increased visibility of workers' and employers' organizations; successful tripartite consultations around policy reforms.	Weak institutionalization of dialogue platforms; limited capacities for collective bargaining.	DWCP prioritizes institutionalizing dialogue mechanisms, building partner capacities, and strengthening collective bargaining frameworks.
Gender equality & inclusion	Effective targeted youth and women's programmes; strong evidence base on gender disparities.	Low women labour force participation persists; ESCs not sufficiently accessible to women and PWDs; limited gender mainstreaming across public systems.	New DWCP integrates gender-responsive service design, targeted interventions for women and PWDs, and systematic sex- and disability-disaggregated data.
Data & evidence	Collaboration with CSO/KRSO improved data quality; new surveys provided a clearer picture of labour market trends.	Gaps remain in SDG labour indicators, informality measurement, and administrative data systems.	DWCP includes a dedicated focus on strengthening labour market data systems, SDG reporting capacity, and administrative data interoperability.





The Mesopotamian Marshes, also known as the Iraqi Marshes, are a wetland area located in southern Iraq and southwestern Iran as well as partially in northern Kuwait. The marshes are primarily located on the floodplains of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, bound by the cities of Basra, Nasiriyah, Amarah and a portion of southwestern Iran and northern Kuwait (particularly Bubiyan Island). Historically, the marshlands, mainly composed of the separate but adjacent Central, Hawizeh and Hammar Marshes, used to be the largest wetland ecosystem of western Eurasia. The unique wetland landscape is home to the Marsh people, who have developed a unique culture tightly coupled to the landscape – harvesting reeds and rice, fishing, and herding water buffalo.



3 Priorities and country programme outcomes

The DWCP (2026-2029) is structured around three strategic priorities, each with defined outcomes and outputs. These priorities align with the National Development Plan (2024-2028), the UNSDCF (2025-2029). In addition, the outcomes contributing to each Strategic Priority are also aligned with the ILO's Programme and Budget. Annex 1 contains the entire Results Framework, along with the activities under each output, indicators, baselines, targets, means of verification, risks, risk mitigation measures, and assumptions.

3.1 Strategic Priority 1: Improved market-relevant skills and inclusive employment

This priority supports efforts to enhance access to quality skills training, promote labour market inclusion, and strengthen employment services. Previous experiences demonstrated the need for strengthening employment services by aligning them closely with market needs and enhancing coordination among service providers, employers, and training institutions. Effectively reducing labour market barriers required comprehensive approaches addressing socio-cultural constraints, particularly for vulnerable groups like women, youth, persons with disabilities and displaced persons. Ensuring vocational training directly matches market demands significantly improved youth employability, emphasizing strong partnerships with private sector stakeholders.

Alignment with NDP

This SP aligns with NDP objective 5: "Developing effective labour market institutions and employment services", objective 6: "Reducing unemployment rates, especially among women, youth, and people with disabilities", and objective 3 under Education: "Improve the alignment between education outputs and labour market needs".

SP's Alignment with UNSDCF 2025-2029:

- UNSDCF priority area: Human capital development and economic diversification.
- Relevant UNSDCF outcome: expanded opportunities for education and employment, particularly for youth and marginalized groups.

Links to decent work and ILO centenary declaration

Decent work elements

- **Employment creation**
Strengthening employment services, labour market programmes, and career guidance to enhance job matching.
- **Social protection**
Expanding training and employment opportunities for vulnerable groups, ensuring access to lifelong learning.
- **Workers' rights**
Promoting equal treatment, non-discrimination, and gender-responsive and inclusive employment policies.
- **Social dialogue**
Engaging employers, trade unions, and government actors in skills development and training policies.

ILO centenary declaration alignment

- **Investing in People's Capabilities** – Promoting skills development, digital skilling, and vocational training to improve employability.
- **Strengthening Institutions of Work** – Enhancing labour market services, technical and vocational education and training systems for better workforce integration.
- **Promoting Decent and Sustainable Work** – Supporting green employment, lifelong learning, and just transition policies.



3.1.1 Outcome 1.1: Modern and efficient employment support services aligned with market needs



Output 1.1.1: Career guidance and counselling centres in educational and technical training institutions are inclusive and gender-responsive, and operational and fully integrated.



Output 1.1.2: Capacities of employment service centres in Iraqi governorates are enhanced to facilitate job placement for young women and men and persons with disabilities.



Output 1.1.3: Enhanced private sector engagement in decision-making bodies governing ESCs.



Output 1.1.4: An inclusive and gender-responsive case management system for employment support services is adopted within relevant public institutions.

This outcome aligns explicitly with NDP Objective 5: “Developing effective labour market institutions and employment services”, which emphasizes establishing efficient employment centres, modernizing employment support systems, and strengthening labour market intermediation.

It also aligns with P&B Outcome 3: Full and productive employment for just transitions. It contributes to P&B Output 3.4, which focuses on increasing the capacity of Member States to develop effective and efficient labour market programmes and services to support transitions. The modernization of Iraq’s employment service centres and integration of private sector participation directly support this objective.

Through the introduction of gender-responsive career guidance, accessible and inclusive employment service centres, and case management systems that identify and address barriers faced by women, youth, and persons with disabilities, this outcome will directly reduce inequalities in access to labour market information, intermediation, and job placement, thereby advancing gender equality and inclusion in employment outcomes.

Theory of change

If career guidance and counselling centres in educational and technical training institutions are established and integrated into their structures in a gender-responsive and inclusive manner (**Output 1.1.1**), employment service centres (ESCs) are upgraded with digital systems and trained personnel that are accessible and responsive to the needs of women and other groups facing barriers (**Output 1.1.2**), the private sector is actively involved in the governance of ESCs with due consideration to equality and non-discrimination (**Output 1.1.3**), and a gender-responsive case management system is implemented to streamline employment support services (**Output 1.1.4**), then jobseekers will receive better-aligned career guidance, efficient job matching, and more structured employment support, leading to improved employment outcomes and satisfaction among both jobseekers and employers.

Contribution to SP1: This outcome ensures that the workforce is equipped with the necessary skills and supported with efficient employment services, leading to better market integration and higher job placement rates.





3.1.2 Outcome 1.2: Reduced barriers to equal access in the labour market



Output 1.2.1: Selected employment service centres strengthened and upgraded to ensure accessibility for all, including for persons with disabilities (PWDs).



Output 1.2.2: Integrated micro and small enterprise development programmes updated to be accessible to youth, women, PWDs, IDPs, and FDPs who have a profession and can work, and implemented.



Output 1.2.3: Inclusive policy and dialogue platforms established, ensuring active participation from women, youth, forcibly displaced persons (FDPs), internally displaced persons (IDPs), and persons with disabilities.

This outcome aligns with NDP Objective 6: “Reducing unemployment rates, especially among women, youth, and people with disabilities”. This objective specifically prioritizes removing barriers for vulnerable groups, enhancing employment access, and ensuring inclusive labour market participation.

It also aligns with P&B Outcome 5: Gender equality and equality of treatment and opportunities for all. It is linked to P&B Output 5.1, which supports Member States in designing and implementing gender equality, non-discrimination, and inclusion policies. Iraq’s efforts to enhance access to employment services for marginalized groups, such as women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and internally displaced persons (IDPs), reinforce these global commitments.

Theory of change

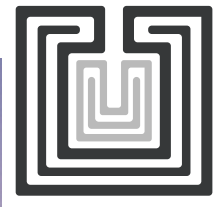
If selected employment service centres are upgraded to be accessible to persons with disabilities (PWDs) (**Output 1.2.1**), targeted microenterprise development programmes are implemented for women, PWDs, IDPs, and FDPs (**Output 1.2.2**), and inclusive policy dialogue platforms are established to ensure marginalized groups’ active participation in shaping labour market policies (**Output 1.2.3**), then labour market inequalities will be reduced, vulnerable groups will have better access to employment and financial resources, and employers will be incentivized to adopt inclusive hiring practices.

Contribution to SP1: By addressing labour market barriers, this outcome enhances the inclusivity of employment opportunities, ensuring that all individuals, including marginalized groups, can contribute to and benefit from economic growth.



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Al-Mustansiriya Madrasa is a prestigious school founded during the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad in 1233 by Caliph Al-Mustansir Billah. It was an important scientific and cultural centre. It is located in the Al-Rusafa district of Baghdad.





3.1.3 Outcome 1.3: Improved access to quality and market-relevant education and skills for youth

Output 1.3.1: Improved representation of the private sector in governance boards of selected training and education institutions.

Output 1.3.2: Comprehensive gender-mainstreamed national skills survey conducted, its findings published, and skills gaps prioritized.

Output 1.3.3: Joint tripartite committees established and guided updating curricula to meet industry standards and greening needs.

Output 1.3.4: Entrepreneurial business management skills and financial education programmes are inclusive and institutionalized in selected technical schools and vocational training centres.

Output 1.3.5: Capacities of selected vocational training centres enhanced.

Output 1.3.6: A nationwide public awareness campaign about the benefits of vocational and technical training conducted.

This outcome directly matches NDP Objective 3 under education: “Improve the alignment between education outputs and labour market needs”, which focuses on developing technical and vocational education and training programmes tailored to current and emerging labour market demands.

It further contributes to P&B outcome 3: Full and productive employment for just transitions. It aligns with P&B Output 3.2, which focuses on increasing the capacity of Member States to develop inclusive, sustainable, and resilient skills and lifelong learning systems. The introduction of TVET-private sector partnerships, national skills surveys, and entrepreneurship training under Iraq’s DWCP strengthens this alignment.

Theory of change

If TVET institutions actively engage with the private sector to align curricula with market needs (**Output 1.3.1**), a national skills survey is conducted to prioritize critical skills gaps (**Output 1.3.2**), tripartite committees update curricula to integrate industry standards and green skills (**Output 1.3.3**), entrepreneurship and financial literacy training is institutionalized (**Output 1.3.4**), vocational training centres are upgraded (**Output 1.3.5**), and public awareness campaigns promote TVET (**Output 1.3.6**), then youth will acquire relevant, high-quality skills that align with labour market demands, leading to higher employment rates and a more skilled workforce.

Contribution to SP1: This outcome strengthens the link between education and employment by ensuring that skills development is demand-driven, preparing youth for sustainable careers and economic participation.

3.2 Strategic Priority 2: Improved job creation through economic diversification, business growth, and just transition

This priority focuses on creating sustainable employment, strengthening MSMEs, and supporting a just transition to a green economy.

Past evaluations underscored the importance of supporting MSMEs through simplified regulatory frameworks, improved financial access, and comprehensive business support services. Successful economic diversification required targeted sector-specific strategies and continuous policy dialogue with government

and private sector actors. Formalization efforts were most effective when MSMEs saw clear economic advantages in becoming formal, supported by strategic incentives and robust local institutional frameworks.

Alignment with NDP

This SP aligns with NDP's Economic Diversification Priority (objective 2): "Diversify the economic structure to reduce reliance on oil revenues", objective 1 under Private Sector Development: "Enhancing the role and competitiveness of the private sector", and objective 4 under Private Sector Development: "Support and develop MSMEs and entrepreneurship"

SP's Alignment with UNSDCF 2025-2029:

- UNSDCF Priority Area: Economic Diversification and Sustainable Growth.
- Relevant UNSDCF Outcome: Strengthened private sector and SMEs to generate sustainable employment.

Links to decent work and ILO centenary declaration

Decent work elements

- **Employment creation**
Promoting MSME growth, private sector development, and investment in non-oil sectors to generate jobs.
- **Social protection**
Supporting the formalization of enterprises to extend labour rights and protections to informal workers
- **Workers' rights**
Ensuring that just transition policies safeguard workers in shifting industries.
- **Social dialogue**
Encouraging collaborative policymaking between social partners on business development and economic transformation.

ILO centenary declaration alignment

- **Investing in people's capabilities**
Facilitating entrepreneurship, business finance, and digital transformation to create new job opportunities.
- **Strengthening institutions of work**
Enhancing business registration, labour law enforcement, and worker protections.
- **Promoting decent and sustainable work**
Encouraging green jobs, innovation, and fair employment practices to support economic sustainability.



3.2.1 Outcome 2.1: Diversified economic opportunities and just transition



Output 2.1.1: Comprehensive labour market situational analysis conducted.



Output 2.1.2: Business greening Programme launched and operationalized.



Output 2.1.3: Supply chain development programmes integrating MSMEs operationalized.



This outcome aligns with NDP's economic diversification priority (Objective 2): "Diversify the economic structure to reduce reliance on oil revenues". The priority emphasizes expanding non-oil sectors (e.g., agriculture, manufacturing, tourism) to broaden employment and economic opportunities.

This outcome is linked to P&B enablers outcome A: Enhanced knowledge, innovation, cooperation and communication to advance social justice. It supports P&B Output A.1, which enhances more and better statistics with reliable labour market information systems. The outcome is also linked to Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work. It supports P&B Output 4.3, which enhances support for enterprises—particularly MSMEs—to achieve decent work and improve productivity. Iraq's efforts in business greening programmes and MSME integration into supply chains contribute to this objective by fostering sustainable economic diversification.

Theory of change

If a comprehensive labour market situational analysis is conducted to identify priority growth sectors (**Output 2.1.1**), a business greening programme is launched to promote green and sustainable enterprises (**Output 2.1.2**), and a supply chain development and trade programme is operationalized to integrate MSMEs into formal markets (**Output 2.1.3**), then the economy will shift toward more diversified and sustainable growth sectors, leading to increased job opportunities outside the oil sector and fostering a just transition towards green employment.

Contribution to SP2: By driving investment and job creation in non-oil sectors, this outcome reduces economic dependence on hydrocarbons and facilitates the transition to a more resilient and diversified economy.



3.2.2 Outcome 2.2: Improved support to the government of Iraq and private sector to boost job creation and decent work



Output 2.2.1: Effective gender-responsive and inclusive national employment policy developed, endorsed and implemented.



Output 2.2.2: Action plans addressing constraints in priority sectors collaboratively developed & implemented by the GoI and respective chambers.



Output 2.2.3: Sustainable public works programme (PWP) designed and implemented.



Output 2.2.4: Employment intensive investment programme (EIIP) is institutionalized within national frameworks.

This outcome is aligned specifically with NDP **Objective 1** under Private Sector Development: "Enhancing the role and competitiveness of the private sector", highlighting the necessity of supporting government-private sector collaborations to drive job creation and economic development.

It is also aligned with **P&B Outcome 3:** Full and productive employment for just transitions and contributes to P&B Output 3.1, which supports the capacity of Member States to develop and implement comprehensive employment policy frameworks, and **P&B Output 3.4**, which is increased capacity of Member States to develop effective and efficient labour market programmes and services to support transitions. Iraq's adoption of a National Employment Policy and sector-specific public-private action plans reflect these priorities.

Theory of change

If a gender-responsive and inclusive National Employment Policy (NEP) is developed and endorsed (**Output 2.2.1**), sector-specific public-private action plans are formulated (**Output 2.2.2**), an effective Public Works



Programme (PWP) is implemented to create short-term employment (**Output 2.2.3**), and the Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) is institutionalized (**Output 2.2.4**), then job creation efforts will be better coordinated, employment-intensive investments will increase, and government-private sector collaboration will enhance the overall employment landscape.

Contribution to SP2: This outcome supports structural employment policies that directly contribute to job growth, enhancing government and private sector capacities to generate sustainable employment.



3.2.3 Outcome 2.3: Improved development of MSMEs and formalization



Output 2.3.1: A unified MSME development policy framework is developed and adopted.



Output 2.3.2: Enhanced MSMEs' access to finance in selected governorates.



Output 2.3.3: Improved MSMEs' access to business development services (BDS) in selected governorates.



Output 2.3.4: Enhanced capacities of cooperatives in governance and financial management.



Output 2.3.5: Enabling environment for the establishment, operation, and growth of sustainable enterprises is improved.

This outcome closely corresponds with **NDP Objective 4 under private sector development**: "Support and develop MSMEs and entrepreneurship". It explicitly addresses formalizing MSMEs, improving regulatory frameworks, and enhancing market access and financial services for small businesses.

This outcome also corresponds to P&B Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work. It aligns with **P&B Output 4.1**, which is increased capacity of constituents to create enabling environments for entrepreneurship, sustainable enterprises, decent work and productivity growth, and **Output 4.4**, which enhances Member States' capacity to facilitate the transition of enterprises to the formal economy. The DWCP's initiatives for MSME development, access to finance, and business registration simplification directly support this agenda.

Theory of change

If a unified MSME Development Policy Framework is adopted (**Output 2.3.1**), MSMEs gain improved access to finance and business development services (**Output 2.3.2**) and (**Output 2.3.3**), cooperative governance and financial management capacities are enhanced (**Output 2.3.4**), and regulatory reforms facilitate business formalization through one-stop-shop business registration facilities (**Output 2.3.5**), then MSMEs will be better equipped to operate formally, access financial resources, and contribute to job creation in a structured and sustainable manner.

Contribution to SP2: By fostering an enabling environment for MSME growth and formalization, this outcome drives economic expansion and employment creation, particularly in underserved business sectors.

3.3 Strategic Priority 3: Improved quality of work and rights-based social protection

This priority focuses on strengthening labour rights, improving social dialogue, and expanding social protection systems.

Prior experience indicates that improved labour standards and rights depended on robust social dialogue, necessitating ongoing capacity-building for workers' and employers' organizations, clear legislative frameworks, and institutionalized dialogue processes. Enhancing labour rights required strengthened enforcement mechanisms, particularly through better-equipped labour inspection systems. Addressing child labour effectively involved integrated, multi-sector approaches that tackled root socio-economic causes, combined educational and social support, and involved community-level engagement and enforcement.

Alignment with NDP

This SP directly aligns with NDP's governance-related priority of "Strengthening participatory governance and social dialogue mechanisms", objective 8 under Labour Market Development: "Enhancing decent work standards, labour rights, and occupational safety and health", and objective 5: "Reducing child labour prevalence by enhancing social protection measures and increasing educational enrolment".

SP's Alignment with UNSDCF 2025-2029:

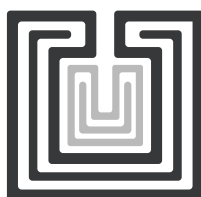
- UNSDCF Priority Area: Governance and Social Protection.
- Relevant UNSDCF Outcome: Strengthened institutional frameworks for labour rights and social security expansion.

Links to decent work and ILO centenary declaration Decent work elements

- **Employment creation**
Promoting fair work environments that ensure stable, formal, and productive jobs.
- **Social Protection**
Expanding pension systems, unemployment insurance, and maternity protections to strengthen worker security.
- **Workers' Rights**
Reinforcing compliance with international labour standards, including freedom of association and collective bargaining
- **Social Dialogue**
Strengthening tripartite mechanisms for effective workplace policies and labour dispute resolution.

ILO centenary declaration alignment

- **Investing in people's capabilities**
Expanding social security programmes, fair wages, and workplace protections.
- **Strengthening Institutions of Work**
Improving labour inspection, legal compliance, and dispute resolution frameworks.
- **Promoting Decent and Sustainable Work**
Ensuring safe workplaces, stronger collective bargaining rights, and enhanced social protections.





3.3.1 Outcome 3.1: Improved social dialogue and collective bargaining



Output 3.1.1: A more enabling environment for tripartite decision-making is created.



Output 3.1.2: Social partners' engagement in social dialogue strengthened.



Output 3.1.3: Capacity of employers' organizations and trade unions to expand discussions internally among membership is developed.

This outcome directly aligns with NDP's governance-related priority of "Strengthening participatory governance and social dialogue mechanisms", emphasizing enhancing stakeholder engagement and strengthening the roles of unions, associations, and civil society in policy dialogue.

This outcome also aligns with P&B Outcome 2: Strong, representative, and influential tripartite constituents and effective social dialogue. It is linked to **P&B Output 2.3**, which focuses on increasing the capacity of Member States to enhance social dialogue and labour relations institutions. Iraq's efforts to establish a National Tripartite Consultative Body and strengthen trade union representation are key contributions to this goal.

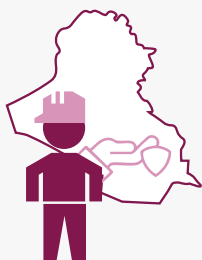
Theory of change

If a more enabling environment for tripartite decision-making is created through labour law amendments and a National Tripartite Consultative Body (**Output 3.1.1**), social partners' engagement in social dialogue is strengthened (**Output 3.1.2**), and employers' organizations and trade unions improve their internal communication and representation strategies (**Output 3.1.3**), then industrial relations will be strengthened, workers' rights will be better protected, and collective bargaining will be more effective, reducing labour disputes and improving working conditions.

Contribution to SP3: This outcome strengthens social dialogue mechanisms, ensuring that labour rights and fair negotiations contribute to a more stable and just work environment.



3.3.2 Outcome 3.2: Improved application of fundamental principles and rights at work (FPRW)



Output 3.2.1: Strengthened labour governance in labour, OSH and social security inspection.

Output 3.2.2: Increased effectiveness of labour justice.

Output 3.2.3: Reduced prevalence of child labour and all forms of forced labour.

Output 3.2.4: Enhanced awareness of workers' rights, including equality and non-discrimination, and OSH, including safety from violence and harassment.

Output 3.2.5: National capacity to ratify International Labour Standards (ILS) and discharge reporting obligations strengthened.

Output 3.2.6: Enhanced capacities of regulatory bodies to ensure that work and OSH regulations are adequately implemented.

This outcome clearly aligns with NDP objective 8 under labour market development: “enhancing decent work standards, labour rights, and occupational safety and health”, prioritizing compliance with labour standards and improving inspection and regulatory frameworks.

This outcome corresponds to P&B Outcome 1: Strong, modernized normative action for social justice. It supports P&B Output 1.1, which is related to enhancing capacity of Member States to ratify international labour standards; and Output 1.4, which increases the capacity of governments, workers, and employers to respect and promote fundamental principles and rights at work. **The outcome is also linked with P&B Outcome 6:** Protection at work for all, specifically **with that of Output 6.1:** Increased capacity of Members for the realization of a safe and healthy working environment. Iraq’s measures to strengthen labour inspection systems, implement child and forced labour interventions, and enhance awareness of OSH and workers’ rights contribute to this objective.

Theory of change

If labour governance is strengthened through improved labour inspection systems (**Output 3.2.1**), alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms reduce labour court backlog (**Output 3.2.2**), child and forced labour prevalence is reduced through targeted inspections and enforcement (**Output 3.2.3**), awareness of workers’ and employers rights and duties on OSH regulations is enhanced (**Output 3.2.4**), regulatory bodies’ capacities are reinforced (**Output 3.2.5**), and national capacity to ratify International Labour Standards (ILS) and discharge reporting obligations strengthened (**Output 3.2.6**) then workplace standards will improve, worker protections will be more effectively enforced, and fundamental labour rights will be upheld.

Contribution to SP3: By ensuring compliance with international labour standards and fostering a rights-based work environment, this outcome advances labour protection and workplace safety, reducing exploitative practices and promoting decent work.



3.3.3 Outcome 3.3: Improved rights-based life cycle approach to social protection



The outcome explicitly matches **NDP’s social protection and child welfare priority, specifically objective 5:** “reducing child labour prevalence by enhancing social protection measures and increasing educational enrolment”. This priority directly addresses tackling the root causes of child labour, expanding educational access, and strengthening monitoring and enforcement mechanisms.

It is also linked to P&B Outcome 7: Universal social protection. It aligns with P&B Output 7.1, which focuses on increasing the capacity of Member States to develop social protection policies that are inclusive, gender-responsive, and sustainable. Iraq’s DWCP strengthens social protection governance, expands coverage, and integrates social insurance and assistance programmes, reinforcing the ILO’s commitment to universal social protection.





Theory of change

If an inclusive, sustainable social security regulatory framework is developed (**Output 3.3.1**), institutional capacity to reduce access barriers to social security is enhanced (**Output 3.3.2**), social partners are actively engaged in social protection governance (**Output 3.3.3**), and coordination between social assistance and social insurance programmes is improved (**Output 3.3.4**), then more individuals, especially vulnerable groups, will be covered by lifecycle-based social protection schemes, ensuring economic security and reducing poverty risks.

Contribution to SP3: This outcome strengthens social protection systems by ensuring that more workers and marginalized populations are included in formal protection schemes.

3.4 Alignment with the ILO programme and budget 2024-2025

The following table shows how the outcomes of the DWCP

Table 2: Summary of DWCP outcomes Vs ILO's programme and budget outcomes and outputs

DWCP Strategic Priority & outcome	ILO programme & budget policy outcomes and outputs (2024-2025)
Improved market-relevant skills and inclusive employment	
Outcome 1.1: Modern and efficient employment support services aligned with labour market needs	P&B Outcome 3: Full and productive employment for just transitions (Output 3.4: Increased capacity of Member States to develop effective and efficient labour market programmes and services to support transitions)
Outcome 1.2: Reduced barriers to equal access in the labour market	P&B Outcome 5: Gender equality and equality of treatment and opportunities for all (Output 5.1: Increased capacity of Member States to design and implement a transformative agenda on gender equality, non-discrimination and inclusion)
Outcome 1.3: Improved access to quality and market-relevant education and skills for youth	P&B Outcome 3: Full and productive employment for just transitions (Output 3.2: Increased capacity of Member States to develop inclusive, sustainable and resilient skills and lifelong learning systems)
Improved job creation through economic diversification, business growth and just transition	
Outcome 2.1: Diversified economic opportunities and just transition	Outcome A: Enhanced knowledge, innovation, cooperation and communication to advance social justice (Output A.1: More and better statistics with reliable labour market information systems) P&B Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work (Output 4.3: Increased support for enterprises – especially MSMEs – to achieve decent work and improve productivity)
Outcome 2.2: Improved support to the government of Iraq and private sector to boost job creation and decent work	P&B Outcome 3: Full and productive employment for just transitions (Output 3.1: Increased capacity of Member States to develop and implement comprehensive employment policy frameworks), and (Output 3.4: Increased capacity of the Government to develop effective and efficient labour market programmes and services to support transitions)
Outcome 2.3: Improved development of MSMEs and formalization	P&B Outcome 4: Sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work (Output 4.1: Increased capacity of constituents to create enabling environments for entrepreneurship, sustainable enterprises, decent work and productivity growth, and Output 4.4: Increased capacity of constituents to facilitate the transition of enterprises to the formal economy) P&B Outcome 8: Integrated policy and institutional responses for social justice through decent work (Output 8.3: Improved coherence in support and action to facilitate just transitions towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies)
Improved Quality of Work and rights-based Social Protection	
Outcome 3.1: Improved social dialogue and collective bargaining	P&B Outcome 2: Strong, representative and influential tripartite constituents and effective social dialogue (Output 2.3: Increased capacity of Member States to make social dialogue more influential and labour relations institutions and processes more effective)
Outcome 3.2: Improved application of fundamental principles and rights at work	P&B Outcome 1: Strong, modernized normative action for social justice (Output 1.1: Increased capacity of Member States to ratify international labour standards; and Output 1.4: Increased capacity of constituents, partners and stakeholders to respect, promote and realize fundamental principles and rights at work) P&B Outcome 6: Protection at work for all (Output 6.1: Increased capacity of Members for the realization of a safe and healthy working environment)
Outcome 3.3: Improved rights-based lifecycle approach to social protection system	P&B Outcome 7: Universal social protection (Output 7.1: Increased capacity of Member States to develop social protection strategies, policies and legal frameworks that are inclusive, gender-responsive and sustainable)

Enhancing labour market data availability and SDG alignment

To reinforce evidence-based programming, the DWCP identifies priority actions to strengthen Iraq's labour market information system and its capacity to produce SDG indicators under ILO custodianship. While progress has been made through the labour force survey conducted in 2021 and recent administrative data improvements, significant information gaps persist, especially in informality measurement, decent working time indicators, employment quality, enterprise dynamics, labour inspection, and social protection coverage.

The DWCP therefore introduces a structured approach to improving national data systems, including:

- Supporting the central statistical organization (CSO) and Kurdistan region statistics office (KRSO) to increase the frequency and quality of labour force surveys and integrate modules on informality, skills, and employment quality.
- Strengthening administrative datasets of employment services, social security institutions, labour inspectorates, and enterprise registries to support production of SDG indicators such as 8.3.1, 8.5.2, 8.6.1, and 1.3.1.
- Establishing collaboration mechanisms between CSO/KRSO, MOLSA, MoP, the social security corporation, and labour inspectorates for harmonized data production and regular reporting.
- Building national capacity to generate disaggregated indicators by sex, age, disability status, geographic region, and vulnerability groups, in line with UNSDCF commitments.
- A summary mapping of SDG labour indicators, available, partially available, and unavailable, will guide prioritization of capacity-building and resource mobilization efforts, ensuring the DWCP supports measurable progress toward SDG 1, 4, 5, 8 and 10.

Clearer linkages between decent work deficits and strategic interventions

To strengthen the strategic relevance of the DWCP, each Strategic Priority is linked to a measurable deficit identified in the diagnostic analysis. This ensures the proposed interventions address challenges verified through empirical data:

- **Strategic priority 1**
responds to high youth unemployment, low women labour force participation, limited access to skills upgrading, and weak labour intermediation systems.
- **Strategic priority 2**
responds to Iraq's high economic concentration in oil, low productivity of MSMEs, high informality, and limited private sector job creation.
- **Strategic priority 3**
responds to gaps in labour law enforcement, weak social dialogue institutions, persistently low social protection coverage, and challenges in compliance with international labour standards.

A strengthened explanation of these direct linkages reinforces the DWCP's problem-solution logic and ensures the strategy remains targeted, coherent, and measurable.



3.5 Alignment with SDGs

The following table shows how the DWCP is closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Table 3: Alignment of DWCP Outcomes with SDGs and Indicators

SPs	DWCP outcome (2026 - 2029)	SDG	SDG indicators in DWCP results matrix
SP1: Improved market-relevant skills and inclusive employment			
	Outcome 1.1: Modern and efficient employment support services that are better aligned with market needs	SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 4: Quality Education	8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age, and persons with disabilities 4.3.1 Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education
	Outcome 1.2: Reduced barriers to equal access in the labour market	SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities SDG 5: Gender Equality	10.4.1 Labour share of GDP 5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions
	Outcome 1.3: Improved access to quality and market-relevant education and skills for youth	SDG 4: Quality Education SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with ICT skills 8.6.1 Proportion of youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET)
SP2: Improved job creation through economic diversification, business growth, and just transition			
	Outcome 2.1: Diversified economic opportunities and just transition	SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 13: Climate Action	8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment 13.2.1 Number of countries with integrated climate policies (includes just transition policies)
	Outcome 2.2: Improved support to the Government of Iraq and private sector to boost job creation	SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities 8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment
	Outcome 2.3: Improved development of MSMEs and formalization	SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	9.3.1 Proportion of small-scale industries in total industry value added
SP3: Improved quality of work and rights-based social protection			
	Outcome 3.1: Improved social dialogue and collective bargaining	SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	8.8.2 National compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) 8.7.1 Proportion of children engaged in child labour
	Outcome 3.2: Improved application of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW)	SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 1: No Poverty	1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection systems, by sex and vulnerable groups 3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services
	Outcome 3.3: Improved rights-based life cycle approach to social protection	SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	10.2.1 Proportion of people living below %50 of median income

Note: SDG indicators reflect those used in the DWCP results matrix for consistency in monitoring and reporting.

Alignment with national priorities and regional commitments

The DWCP further clarifies its alignment with Iraq's priority national frameworks, including the National Development Plan (2024–2028), the National Employment Policy (2024–2030), and the National Strategy to Prevent and Reduce Inequalities in the World of Work (2024–2028). A consolidated table mapping **DWCP Strategic Priority** → **National Priority** → **SDG Target** highlights the coherence between national policy objectives and DWCP expected results.

Additionally, the DWCP aligns with the ILO regional meeting conclusions for Arab states, particularly commitments on:

- Job-rich growth and private sector development
- Youth employment and skills development
- Strengthening labour governance and social dialogue
- Social protection expansion and financing
- Advancing gender equality and decent work in climate transition contexts.

This reinforces the DWCP's relevance at national and regional levels and ensures Iraq's engagement contributes to broader regional decent work trajectories.

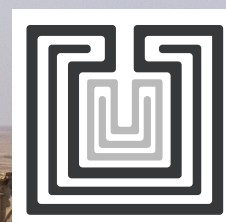
Strengthening the analysis of national data production capacity

To support long-term sustainability of labour market information systems, the DWCP adds a concise assessment of institutional capacity for data production. Key elements include:

- Current strengths and limitations of CSO, KRSO, and MOLSA data systems
- Challenges in coordination between national statistical bodies and administrative data producers
- Gaps in digitalization and interoperability across ESC, social security, enterprise registries, and labour inspection systems
- Priority areas for ILO technical support (data standards, survey design, indicator methodologies, administrative data strengthening).

This capacity assessment informs the design of future ILO support to national institutions and aligns with UN CCA recommendations on strengthening Iraq's statistical ecosystem.

Al-Hadar is an Iraqi city 80 km (50 mi) southwest of Mosul. It is believed that the city was founded at the beginning of the 2nd century BC. It currently serves as the administrative centre of Al-Hadar District in Nineveh Governorate.



3.6 Risk, threat, and opportunity analysis for DWCP Iraq (2026-2029)

The table below presents an analysis of risks, opportunities and the risk mitigation measures.

Table 4: Risk, threat, and opportunity analysis

Outcome	Main risks & threats	Opportunities	Risk mitigation strategies
Outcome 1.1: Modern and efficient employment support services that are better aligned with market needs	- Limited private sector engagement in employment service governance. - Insufficient government funding for modernization. - Resistance from employment service centre (ESC) staff to adopting modern technologies.	- Growing demand for digital job-matching services. - International organizations interested in funding employment service reforms.	- Conduct regular consultations with the private sector to ensure their concerns are integrated. - Advocate for public-private partnerships (PPPs) to co-finance ESC modernization. - Provide change management training for ESC staff to ensure smoother adoption of digital platforms.
Outcome 1.2: Reduced barriers to equal access in the labour market	- Employer reluctance to hire marginalized groups (women, PWDs, IDPs). - Microfinance institutions (MFIs) hesitant to lend to marginalized entrepreneurs. - Social stigma around hiring PWDs and women in non-traditional sectors.	- Legal frameworks promoting equal employment. - Increased awareness of diversity benefits in the workplace. - International donor interest in supporting women empowerment initiatives.	- Implement employer incentive programmes (e.g., tax benefits, subsidies) to encourage inclusive hiring. - Establish credit guarantee schemes to encourage MFIs to lend to marginalized entrepreneurs. - Launch national awareness campaigns to shift employer and societal attitudes towards inclusive hiring.
Outcome 1.3: Improved access to quality and market-relevant education and skills for youth	- Low enrolment in TVET programmes due to stigma. - Mismatch between TVET curricula and industry needs. - Limited investment in TVET infrastructure.	- High demand for skilled labour in growth sectors. - Digital and green skills are increasingly valued. - Private sector willing to collaborate on curriculum development.	- Run public awareness campaigns highlighting TVET success stories and career prospects. - Require private sector involvement in co-designing TVET curricula. - Seek international and private sector funding for upgrading TVET infrastructure.
Outcome 2.1: Diversified economic opportunities and just transition	- Slow adoption of green business practices. - Limited formalization of MSMEs. - Uncertainty in investment climate	- Growing global demand for green jobs. - Government initiatives to support MSMEs. - Potential for international funding in climate-related economic initiatives.	- Provide targeted incentives (e.g., tax breaks, green financing) for businesses adopting sustainable practices. - Simplify business registration and licensing to encourage MSME formalization. - Strengthen investor confidence through regulatory stability and incentives.
Outcome 2.2: Improved support to the Government of Iraq and private sector to boost job creation	- Weak institutional capacity to implement employment-intensive investment Programmes (EIIP) and supply chain programme. - Limited financing for employment-intensive projects.	- Government commitment to economic diversification. - Private sector interest in participating in infrastructure projects. - International donors willing to support large-scale employment programmes.	- Provide technical assistance and capacity-building for government agencies implementing EIIP. - Establish multi-donor trust funds to leverage international development financing.
Outcome 2.3: Improved development of MSMEs and formalization	- Lack of incentives for MSMEs to transition from the informal to the formal sector. - Limited access to finance for small enterprises. - Excessive cost of compliance for MSMEs.	- Potential for job creation in the MSME sector. - Increasing availability of digital financial services. - Business incubators and accelerators emerging as support mechanisms.	- Implement tax benefits and financial incentives for formalizing MSMEs. - Expand credit guarantee programmes to support small business financing. - Reduce regulatory burdens by streamlining business registration and compliance procedures.
Outcome 3.1: Improved social dialogue and collective bargaining	- Lack of recognition of independent trade unions.	- Increased global focus on labour rights and decent work. - Trade unions and employer organizations open to reform. - ILO technical assistance available for strengthening dialogue mechanisms.	- Conduct policy dialogue with the government (especially with standing committee of the Parliament) on the issue.
Outcome 3.2: Improved application of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW)	- Weak enforcement of labour laws.	- Increasing international scrutiny on labour rights compliance. - Potential for digitalization of labour inspection systems. - Employer organizations willing to collaborate on improving workplace safety.	- Strengthen labour inspection and reporting mechanisms, including digital case management.
Outcome 3.3: Improved rights-based life cycle approach to social protection	- Fragmentation of social protection programmes. - Low coverage of informal workers in social security systems. - Financial sustainability concerns for expanded social protection.	- Growing policy interest in universal social protection. - Digital transformation enables more efficient service delivery. - Potential for international funding and technical support.	- Integrate social security and social assistance databases for better coordination. - Expand coverage of informal workers through incentives and flexible contribution schemes. - Secure long-term funding commitments for social protection programmes.

By identifying risks and mitigation strategies, this analysis ensures that potential obstacles are proactively addressed, and opportunities for decent work and economic growth are maximized. The DWCP Iraq (2026-2029) remains adaptable and responsive to external challenges while leveraging institutional, economic, and social opportunities to achieve sustainable progress.

4 Management, Implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation arrangements

4.1 DWCP governance structure

The development of the new DWCP marks an opportunity – both for ILO and its constituents – to refine and enhance approaches so as to target and create real change on the ground. It also serves as a prime means of addressing programme governance challenges.

The oversight of the DWCP will be managed by the existing national tripartite steering committee comprised of officials from MOLSA, representatives from employers' and workers' organizations and the ILO. This committee is crucial in guiding and overseeing the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the DWCP, ensuring that it progresses smoothly and effectively. In concrete terms, this means integrating Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) processes into the DWCP formulation processes, based on intentional reflection on how changes will occur – including making explicit assumptions about cause-and-effect – as well as determining what significant intermediate milestones might be, and how to judge the success of interventions considering this framework. This process will be built on during the implementation of the DWCP.

The ILO will support the national tripartite steering committee, which will meet at least on a biannual basis to monitor and oversee the implementation of the DWCP. The terms of reference for the tripartite committee will be revised and set out the governance structure for the DWCP and its mechanisms. The ILO will promote women's participation in the national tripartite steering committee.

Additionally, the governance arrangements for the DWCP may also include the participation of partners, including other UN entities and main funding partners in the country, in specific meetings of tripartite steering committees, further broadening the scope of oversight and collaborative engagement.



The Great Mosque of Samarra, or Al-Malwiya, it, 'Mosque of the Spiral One' is a former congregational mosque, now in partial ruins, in Samarra, in the Saladin Governorate of Iraq. The mosque was commissioned in 848 CE and completed in 851 by the Abbasid caliph Al-Mutawakkil. At the time of construction, it was the world's largest mosque. It is known for its 52-metre-high (171 ft) minaret encircled by a spiral ramp.

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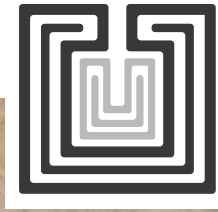
4.2 DWCP monitoring and evaluation arrangement

The DWCP results framework (Annex 1) will allow for regular monitoring against anticipated results. To facilitate effective monitoring and tracking of the aspired results, a detailed Monitoring and Evaluation Plan will be prepared based on best practices in ILO programming and results-based management (RBM) frameworks. The plan will include purpose and scope, routine monitoring mechanisms, including data collection methods, tools, frequency, responsibilities, and review timelines. It will also encapsulate how tripartite constituents and national partners will participate in the M&E process. All products of the M&E exercises and lessons learned will be documented and shared through periodic reports, briefs and other communication modalities.

The ILO will produce DWCP annual progress reports and disseminate them to its constituents and other relevant stakeholders, no later than three months following the end of the annual implementation period. The report will highlight constituents' efforts in support of the DWCP outcomes, as well as achievements, risks and challenges, opportunities, lessons learned, emerging best practices, and key focus areas for the subsequent year of implementation.

Furthermore, in view of the dynamic and evolving Iraqi context, it is vital to build in scope to revise initial assumptions – or indeed objectives – where the operating environment shifts as ongoing adaptation becomes essential to maintain alignment of global and country-level priorities. Hence, conducting country programme reviews and evaluations is crucial for assessing the DWCP's performance, examining progress against expected outcomes, and identifying opportunities for improvement and learning. This may involve scheduling some degree of formative evaluation in the middle of the implementation period of the DWCP, as a 'reality check' that the scheduled activities remain in line with current needs of constituents and are delivering real change. At the end of the DWCP period, the ILO and its constituents will jointly conduct an independent final evaluation of the DWCP in accordance with ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation.

The ILO will ensure close engagement with UNCT/RCO efforts to coordinate and align regular monitoring processes in view of the new UNSDCF 2025-2029, seeking to encourage the participation of constituents.



The shemagh is usually made of white, thin cotton fabric with rectangular or square patterns in red, and is often folded into a triangle and placed on the head and sometimes on the shoulder.

5 Funding plan

To effectively deliver results, the ILO and its tripartite constituents need to assess the financial and other resources required to translate the DWCP ambitions into implementable activities and actions. In this regard, the ILO's plans and initiatives for resource mobilization to support the DWCP's implementation fit within the UNSDCF Funding Framework. The ILO will contribute to the development and implementation of a resource mobilization approach under this framework that leverages joint UN funds to support the Government's development.

In this context, the ILO and tripartite constituents will work together to identify, mobilize and monitor resources to achieve the outcomes and outputs set out in the DWCP for the 2026–2029 period. The following key sources are envisaged:

- **Tripartite constituents' resources:** These will include budgetary allocations, as well as contributions of expertise, and leveraging partnerships and constituencies, as follows:
 - Ongoing national government budget allocations, in line with relevant federal Iraq and KRI policies, strategies and plans on which the DWCP builds and to which it contributes.
 - Promoting and supporting private investment in the creation of decent work and the skilling, upskilling and reskilling of constituents' workforces, as well as workers' participation in decent work and workplace cooperation initiatives.
 - Policy engagement by employers' and workers' organizations in areas that facilitate the increased availability of national and international resources to support the implementation of the DWCP's outcomes and outputs.
 - The contributions of time by constituents' staff members, the use of constituents' facilities and services, and constituents' facilitating access to wider constituencies and networks, as appropriate.

Extra-budgetary technical cooperation projects funded through various multilateral or bilateral development partners: The main resources for the DWCP's implementation are from extra-budgetary technical cooperation funding, which is contributed by various bilateral and multilateral agencies. The European Union and the Governments of Italy, Germany and Netherlands are the main resource partners of activities that will be carried out under the DWCP.

ILO Regular Budget Supplementary Account (RBSA): Programmes of strategic significance can be funded for specific periods by the RBSA, which is based on unconditional funding to the ILO by various development partners.

ILO global and regional programmes: The ILO implements various cross-country programmes at the global and regional levels to address common issues faced by the countries concerned.

ILO technical resources: The DWCP's implementation will involve technical backstopping and the advisory support of the ILO technical specialists at the Decent Work Team (DWT) based at ROAS in Beirut, Lebanon, and global ILO specialist and programme support units based at the ILO's headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

Joint UN programming: The ILO will leverage joint efforts within the UN Country Team to broaden the resource base and increase the efficient use of available resources. The ILO's engagement in the development and implementation of Joint Work Plans under the UNSDCF will provide an important platform for the development of such collaboration.

National and UN financing for development initiatives: The ILO will participate in the development of the joint resource mobilization strategy at the UNSDCF level. This will involve a particular focus on engaging the private sector through the ILO's employer organization constituents, fostering new partnerships through the development of joint proposals with social partners, and building on existing partnerships with the UN and international partners, among other approaches.

Global UN funds and programmes: The ILO will explore options for DWCP financing such as the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, launched in September 2021 by the United Nations Secretary-General. Other relevant global funds will also be explored as potential funding sources.

Strategic partnership with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and future engagement in the South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC): The ILO through the PROSPECTS partnership programme is

collaborating with IFIs such as World Bank and IFC to support decent job creation, financial inclusion, and private-sector-led growth. The ILO has begun a partnership with development finance institutions such as KfW Development Bank through the support obtained from BMZ to expand SME access to credit through loan facilities and credit-guarantee mechanisms. These efforts have focused on improving access to finance for SMEs—particularly youth- and women-led enterprises and displaced populations—while also building the capacity of financial institutions, strengthening Environmental Social Governance (ESG) and sustainable finance practices, and linking financial sector development more closely to employment, livelihoods, and decent work outcomes in Iraq. The ILO will continue to collaborate with such IFIs.

The ILO recognizes that the current global financial stress has constrained traditional funding avenues and therefore sees significant untapped potential in alternative resource mobilization, including **South-South and Triangular Cooperation**. These modalities offer opportunities for Iraq to leverage peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, technical expertise, and financial support from other developing countries, often facilitated or complemented by multilateral organizations. By tapping into these collaborative approaches, Iraq can access context-relevant solutions for economic growth, job creation, and social protection, while diversifying its development partnerships beyond conventional donor channels.

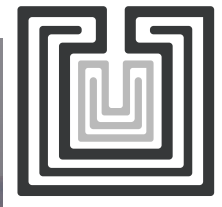
Private sector engagement including the oil companies: While direct funding of DWCP by private companies is not typical, the following types of engagements are envisaged:

- **Sectoral initiatives:** Oil and gas sector companies participate in multi-stakeholder projects on issues like climate change and green business, occupational safety and health (OSH), skills development, and decent work in supply chains.
- **Partnerships via Global Framework Agreements (GFAs):** Some multinational companies, including those in the energy sector, sign agreements with global unions committing to decent work principles.

Full implementation of activities planned under the strategic priorities of the DWCP is contingent on implementation of existing technical development cooperation projects and successful resource mobilization. The following table depicts existing technical development cooperation projects with available resources; projects under pipeline in which the ILO is putting effort to mobilize resources contributing towards Strategic Priority areas of the DWCP.

Erbil Citadel is an ancient fortress and citadel situated atop a hill in the heart of Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. It serves as the historic center of Erbil in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The citadel has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since June 21, 2014.

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DC Code	DC Project Name	Contributing Partners	Project Budget (USD)	Start Date	End Date	Strategic Priority Areas of the DWCP
IRQ/20/06/EUR	Phase 1- Social Protection Programme, Leveraging Effective Response and Accelerating Reform	EU	\$11,628,169	01/04/2021	30/09/2026	SP-3 (Outcome 3.3)
IRQ/22/03/ITA	Towards more and better employment through enhanced support to private sectors in southern Iraq – with a focus on green business	Italy, AICS	\$3,216,118	09/03/2023	12/09/2026	SP-1 (Outcome 1.1, 1.2, 1.3) & SP-2 (Outcome 2.1, 2.3)
IRQ/23/03/EUR	Building Equitable and Inclusive Transformation (BEIT): Towards Decent Work and Affordable Housing in Iraq	EU	\$6,809,238	01/01/2024	28/02/2028	SP-1 (Outcome 1.2,1.3); SP-2 (Outcome 2.2) & SP-3 (Outcome 3.1,3.2)
IRQ/23/04/EUR	Phase 2 - Social Protection Programme, Leveraging Effective Response and Accelerating Reform	EU	\$8,788,000	01/01/2024	22/11/2027	SP-3 (Outcome 3.3)
IRQ/23/05/DEU	Promotion of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Iraq	KfW Development Bank	\$41,586,071	01/01/2024	31/12/2031	SP-2 (Outcome 2.3) SP-1 (Outcome 1.1, 1.2, 1.3)
IRQ/23/50/NLD	PROSPECTS - Phase 2	The Netherlands	\$12,661,997	01/01/2024	31/12/2027	& SP-2 (Outcome 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)
Opportunity Fund-Phase-2	Bridging the Gap: inclusive learning/ Skills -to- employment pathways for vulnerable young people in Iraq. And pilot micro - credentials for entry -level skills in the construction sector.	The Netherlands	\$4,396,039	01/01/2026	31/12/2027	SP-1 (Outcome 1.1, 1.2, 1.3) & SP-2 (Outcome 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)
IRQ/24/02/DEU	Promoting Employment and Employability among Refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Host Communities focusing on Women, PWDs, and Youths in Northern Iraq.	GIZ	\$2,649,463	28/10/2024	31/03/2026	SP-1 (Outcome 1.1, 1.2, 1.3) & SP-2 (Outcome 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)
GLO/24/30/DEU	Social Partners as Agents for Just Transition	Germany	\$1,400,678	27/11/2024	31/12/2028	SP-3 (Outcome 3.3)
N/A	Towards more and better employment through enhanced support to private sectors in southern Iraq – with a focus on green business	Italy, AICS	\$4,720,280	Pipeline	N/A	SP-1 (Outcome 1.1, 1.2, 1.3) & SP-2 (Outcome 2.1, 2.3)
N/A	Building Technical Capacities of Implementing Partners at UNESCO's "Reviving Mosul and Basra Old Cities Phase-3" Project using ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) Approaches in Cultural Heritage Sector in Iraq	UNESCO	\$101,600	Pipeline	N/A	SP-2 (Outcome 2.2)
Total available funds			<u>\$93,135,773</u>	80%		
Total funds under pipeline			<u>\$4,821,880</u>	4%		
Total estimated funding gap			<u>\$19,000,000</u>	16%		

6 Advocacy & communication plan

The ILO will ensure that a proper advocacy and communication strategy is in place to realize the priority areas and overarching objectives of the DWCP by engaging key stakeholders and other audiences at various levels. The ILO will provide technical support to the constituents in advocating and promoting decent work, inclusive and productive work for all, strengthening social dialogue, improving social protection, and upholding international labour standards. Furthermore, the ILO will provide the following technical support, including but not limited to the following, while reaching out to target audiences:

- Provide strategic leadership for all communication matters concerning the DWCP and its implementation.
- Enhance news outreach to key audiences.
- Improve web and social media presence and impact.
- Strengthen advocacy on priority outcomes within the DWCP.
- Support the preparation of reports and promotion of publications.
- Enable effective communication between the ILO and constituents to support achieving DWCP outcomes.
- Build communication capacity of tripartite constituents through training and access to online guidelines and tutorials.
- Measure success using the key performance indicators of the ILO Global Communications Plan.

The target audience of the advocacy and communication effort includes constituents, parliamentarians, resource partners/donor community, media, the wider public, civil society organizations, the private sector and the academic and research community.

The following communication channels will be utilized:

- Traditional Media: Press releases, TV/radio interviews, feature stories.
- Social Media: Facebook, Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Instagram, Blogs.
- Printed Materials and Digital publishing: Fact sheets, brochures, posters, newsletters.
- Events and Campaigns: National policy and strategy launch, national and regional labour related conferences, World Days (World Day for decent work, Labour/Workers' Day, World Day against child labour, World Day for safety and health at work, World Day on social justice) workshops, public forums.
- Digital Platforms: ILO country website, newsletters, multimedia (videos).





Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Impact: An equitable and resilient labour market that provides for inclusive decent and productive employment for women and men in Iraq.					
Strategic priority 1: Improved market-relevant skills and inclusive employment.					
Outcome 1.1: Modern and efficient employment support services aligned with market needs.	- % increase in jobseekers placed through employment centres. - % of employers' and jobseekers satisfied with job matching services. - No. of employers and jobseekers using public employment services.	X (TBD) TBD TBD	X+25% 80% TBD	MoLSA Annual Reports, ESC records MoLSA reports, ESC records MoLSA reports, ESC records	Assumptions: GoI allocates sufficient resources for modernizing and digitizing employment support services, aligning with the National Employment Policy (2025–2030). It further assumes active engagement and acceptance by ESC staff and management towards adopting new systems and practices. Lastly, this outcome relies on consistent private sector engagement to ensure that services meet actual market needs and remain relevant to jobseekers and employers alike. - Risk: Limited private sector engagement. Mitigation: Conduct regular consultations and orientations with chambers.
Output 1.1.1: Career guidance and counselling centres in educational and technical training institutions are inclusive and gender responsive, and operational and fully integrated.	Number of institutions with operational career guidance centres integrated into their structure. Percentage of final-year students receiving career counselling services before graduation	TBD TBD	Target: X+15 (2029) +50% by 2029	Institutional reports, MoLSA and Ministry of Education records Student survey results; school records	- The Ministry of Education and MoLSA formally integrate career guidance into school and training institution systems, providing the necessary staffing and budget. - High-level commitment to align education with labour market needs. - School administrations cooperate in establishing these career centres
Activity 1.1.1.1: Establish career guidance & counselling units in X technical schools and vocational training centres, integrating them into school structures and linking them with public employment services (MoLSA, Ministry of Education, school administrations).					
Activity 1.1.1.2: Develop SOPs, standardized guiding tools and train career counsellors, ensuring services are gender-sensitive and inclusive (MoLSA, Ministry of Education, ILO).					
Output 1.1.2: Capacities of employment service centres in Iraqi governorates are enhanced to facilitate job placement for young women and men and persons with disabilities.	Number of employment service centres upgraded with trained staff. Number of ESCs upgraded with digital systems Standardized SOPs in place.	TBD 0 0	30 centres 30 1	MoLSA reports, verification visits	-MoLSA is committed to modernizing ESCs nationwide, ensuring the necessary funding, staff training, and digital infrastructure upgrades. It is assumed that this effort is backed by Iraq's National Employment Policy (2025–2030).
Activity 1.1.2.1: Modernize public employment service centres nationwide by developing SOPs, digital systems, and staff competencies (MoLSA, ILO).					
Activity 1.1.2.2: Implement data interoperability between employment centres and social protection databases.					
Activity 1.1.2.3: Launch an online job matching portal integrated with the public employment service and conduct a campaign to register employers and jobseekers (MoLSA, ILO).					
Activity 1.1.2.4: Embed Job Search Clubs (JSCs) with in PESCs to facilitate peer-to-peer networking and enhance job placement for young graduating students and graduates.					
Output 1.1.3: Enhanced private sector engagement in decision-making bodies governing ESCs.	Number of ESC advisory committees with employer representation established within ESCs. Satisfaction rate of employers on involvement in ESC governance (scale 1–10)	0 TBD	10 ≥8/10	Committee meeting records, MoUs Annual survey of committee members	Private sector is willing and able to participate in the governance of ESCs on the national and regional levels. GOI is willing to change the governance structures of ESCs to allow private sector participation.
Activity 1.1.3.1: Create national and regional advisory committees for employment services that include representatives from employers' organizations and Trade Unions (MoLSA, Chambers of Commerce/Industry, TUs, ILO).					
Activity 1.1.3.2: Organize annual "Labour Market Council" meetings bringing together government (MoLSA, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Education), employers, and trade unions specifically to review employment support services.					
Output 1.1.4: An inclusive and gender-responsive case management system for employment support services is adopted within relevant public institutions.	Percentage of employment service centres implementing the digital case management system. Number of staff trained in case management.	0% 0	100% TBD	MoLSA IT system rollout reports; system operational logs Training records	MoLSA prioritizes the digitalization of employment services, integrating the new case management system with existing national databases.
Activity 1.1.4.1: Develop and implement a standard digital case management system across employment centres to record jobseekers' profiles, track services provided, record services delivered to them, and monitor outcomes (MoLSA, ILO).					
Activity 1.1.4.2: Train employment centre staff and managers on effective utilization of the case management system (MoLSA, ILO).					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Outcome 1.2: Reduced barriers to equal access in the labour market	Employment rate among persons with disabilities (PWDs) % of persons from marginalized groups (Women, IDPs, FDP) benefitting from microfinance programmes. Percentage increase in employer adoption of inclusive hiring practices	11% (2021, Iraq Labour Force Survey) TBD TBD (baseline survey among employers).	18% 40% annual increase 20%	Iraq Labour Force Surveys, ESC employment records MFIs' records and annual reports. Employer surveys, labour inspections reports	Assumptions: Willingness and commitment among employers to integrate workers from marginalized groups into their workforce, potentially fostered by effective advocacy and incentives programmes. It also assumes continued political and social stability allowing consistent implementation of supportive policies and programmes aimed at inclusive employment. Targeted populations must be aware of and actively utilize these expanded opportunities provided through ESCs and microfinance initiatives. - Risk: Private sector resistance to inclusive hiring practices. - Mitigation: Employer incentives programmes and awareness campaigns. - Risk: MFIs may be reluctant to on-lend to the target groups. - Mitigation: Utilization of best practices and lessons learned, in addition to credit guarantee schemes.
Output 1.2.1: Selected Employment Service Centres strengthened and upgraded to ensure accessibility for all, including for persons with disabilities (PWDs).	- Number of PWD ESCs upgraded to be fully accessible for persons with disabilities - Number of PWDs who received job placement through ESCs.	0 TBD	5 +1000	MoLSA records, site inspection reports. MoLSA records (disaggregated by disability)	MoLSA's Commission on Disabilities and local authorities will actively support the renovation of facilities and that disability-focused NGOs will remain engaged in advising on necessary accommodations.
Activity 1.2.1.1: Upgrade selected employment service centres to be fully accessible and tailored to PWD's needs, develop SOPs, digitize systems and train staff (MoLSA, local authorities, disability NGOs).					
Activity 1.2.1.2: Create a database of qualified PWD jobseekers and a roster of "disability-friendly" employers.					
Activity 1.2.1.3: Organize targeted job fairs and internship programmes for PWDs and provide recognition awards to employers who demonstrate excellence in hiring and accommodating PWDs.					
Output 1.2.2: Integrated micro and small enterprise development programmes updated to be accessible to youth, women, PWDs, IDPs, and FDPs who have a profession and can work, and implemented.	Number of integrated microenterprise development programmes. Number of clients of each program. No. of loans and grants recipients per program. Value of grants and loans per program No. of BDS recipients per program. No. of entrepreneurship training graduates per program.	0 0 0 0 0 0	4 2500 2500 \$1 million 500 500	ILO reports Program reports MFI reports MFI reports Program reports Training attendance sheets/reports	Financial and microfinance institutions will partner with the ILO and NGOs to pilot and scale these microenterprise programmes. Continued donor support or credit guarantee schemes to encourage MFIs to lend to these target groups (mitigating their perceived risk).
Activity 1.2.2.1: Work with the Iraqi Microfinance Network (IMFI), local MFIs, and NGOs catering for the target groups on developing and piloting a range of microfinance products targeting these groups.					
Activity 1.2.2.2: Provide BDS and entrepreneurship training. Small grants followed by microloans to those with viable business ideas can be tied to the successful completion of entrepreneurship courses.					
Activity 1.2.2.3: Pilot in a limited number of locations before scaling.					
Output 1.2.3. Inclusive policy and dialogue platforms established, ensuring active participation from women, youth, forcibly displaced persons (FDPs), internally displaced persons (IDPs), and persons with disabilities.	Number of inclusive policy platforms actively involving marginalized groups established and functional. Number of marginalized persons involved. Annual number of inclusive policy dialogues held.	1 0 0	Target: 5 platforms by 2029 TBD 2 meetings annually per forum	Platform minutes, decrees establishing platforms Platform membership lists, attendance lists	Key stakeholders are committed to sustained social dialogue on inclusion in the labour market. Marginalized groups will have representation through NGOs or community organizations in policy discussions. MoLSA and social partners will institutionalize these dialogue platforms, and there will be political support to ensure these groups can participate safely and effectively.
Activity 1.2.3.1. Establish multi-stakeholder policy dialogue platforms to review and address labour market barriers for marginalized groups (MoLSA, Civil Society Organizations, Employer organizations).					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Activity 1.2.3.2. Develop a legal and organizational framework that formalizes the roles and responsibilities of participants.					
Activity 1.2.3.3. Providing training, facilitation and resources to enhance the ability of stakeholders to engage effectively in the dialogue process, ensuring that discussions are productive and informed.					
Outcome 1.3: Improved access to quality and market-relevant education and skills for youth.	- % of TVET graduates employed in relevant sectors within one year after graduation - # of TVET institutions integrating green skills curricula - % of employers reporting satisfaction with TVET graduate skills (Baseline: X%, Target: +Y% by 2029).	TBD TBD TBD	X+25% 5 80%	MoLSA reports, post-graduation surveys. TVET Institutions reports -IFI, COC	Assumptions: TVET curricula and training methods are effectively aligned with private sector participation in curriculum development. Sustained youth interest and enrolment in TVET programmes, influenced positively by targeted public awareness campaigns reducing stigma around vocational education. Continuous government support and investment in upgrading TVET facilities and instructor competencies are essential for sustaining education quality and relevance. Risk: Mismatch between TVET training and industry demands. Mitigation: Require private sector co-design of curricula and periodic labour market updates. Risk: Low enrolment in TVET programmes due to stigma. Mitigation: Launch public awareness campaigns showcasing high-earning TVET careers.
Output 1.3.1: Improved representation of the private sector in governance boards of selected training and education institutions.	Number of technical institutions with active governance boards with private sector representation. Number of curricula or training programmes revised with direct industry input	Baseline: 0 institution s (2024) 0	Target: 10 5 per year per institution	Board membership rosters, institutional reports Ministry of Education/MOLSA curriculum committee reports	The relevant education authorities establish and empower governance boards (or advisory councils) at vocational schools and training institutes that include employers. The private sector is willing to contribute time and expertise to school governance. Institutional arrangements (e.g. MOUs or regulations) will formalize industry involvement in curriculum reviews, internship programmes, and overall management of training institutions, ensuring training is aligned with market needs.
Activity 1.3.1.1: Identify and partner with training and educational institutions with specializations (or faculties) possibly catering to the priority sectors identified in 2.1.2. below. (MoLSA, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education).					
Activity 1.3.1.2: Form advisory boards for the above specializations that can identify private sector skills and knowledge needs and advise updating the curricula of these institutions accordingly.					
Activity 1.3.1.3: Employer organizations supported to offer work-based learning programmes and/or host the practical training of senior students/trainees.					
Output 1.3.2: Comprehensive gender-mainstreamed National Skills Survey conducted, its findings published, and skills gaps prioritized.	Completion and publishing of comprehensive national skills survey. Number of sectors with skills gaps prioritized by tripartite committee	0 0	1 Skills gaps prioritized for 5 sectors	Published survey, High profile event Government decree on committee formation; meeting minutes	GOI allocates the necessary resources and coordination for a nationwide skills survey.
Activity 1.3.2.1: Design and carry out a comprehensive National Skills Survey covering employers across Iraq to map current workforce skills and future needs (Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Education, MoLSA, ILO experts). This activity should be periodically conducted every 3-4 years.					
Activity 1.3.2.2: Publish a National Skills Assessment Report and disseminate it through a high-profile event (MoLSA, Ministry of Higher Education).					
Activity 1.3.2.3: Establish a tripartite committee to prioritize key skills gaps identified (for example, skills in the construction sector or IT programmers) and develop an implementation plan to address them.					
Output 1.3.3: Joint tripartite committees established and guided updating curricula to meet industry standards and greening needs.	No. of committees established Number of curricula updated by tripartite committees.	0 0	At least 5 At least 5	Curriculum documents, committee records, records of educational authorities	Employers' associations and TUs actively participate, using the committees to regularly update training content. Recommendations from these committees (new curriculum standards, green skill modules, etc.) will be approved by the education authorities so they can be implemented in training institutions.
Activity 1.3.3.1: Set up Sector Skills Councils or tripartite committees in priority sectors (with membership from relevant ministries, chambers, and trade unions to assess industry and greening needs and guide the updating of vocational curricula and training standards. (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Environment, MoLSA, sectoral employers' organizations, ILO).					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Activity 1.3.3.2: Through each Sector Skills Council, lead a curriculum revision process: map required competencies for key occupations, compare with current curricula, and revise accordingly.					
Activity 1.3.3.3: Embed green skills and environmental sustainability concepts into TVET curricula across multiple sectors (e.g. energy efficiency, renewable energy installation, and waste management into relevant courses. (Ministry of Education/TVET, MoLSA, ILO)					
Output 1.3.4: Entrepreneurial business management skills and financial education programmes are institutionalized in selected technical schools and vocational training centres.	Number of technical schools and centres integrating standardized entrepreneurship and financial literacy courses.	0	10	Ministry of Education curriculum integration orders; school timetables. School records; graduation surveys (with course completion)	The education and training system is open to embedding standardized entrepreneurship and financial literacy curricula into its programmes and allocate time for these courses in the academic schedule.
	Number of students completing entrepreneurship/financial literacy training as part of the curriculum	0	5000		
Activity 1.3.4.1: Integrate a standardized entrepreneurship education program (like ILO’s SIYB or KAB or a simplified Start-Your-Business module) into the curricula of technical schools and vocational centres to educate students about how to generate business ideas, prepare basic business plans, and understand market needs.					
Activity 1.3.4.2: Include financial literacy and personal finance modules in the training programmes to educate students about budgeting, saving, credit management, and using financial services safely.					
Output 1.3.5: Capacities of selected vocational training centres enhanced (especially those catering for the priority sectors).	Number of vocational training centres upgraded with modern equipment and operational.	0	5	MoLSA and institutional reports, inspection visits	There is sufficient investment (from government budgets, private sector contributions, and/or international donors) to upgrade the equipment, facilities, and staff skills at targeted vocational training centres. Stability in the regions where these centres operate so that infrastructure investments are secure, and the centres can retain trained instructors.
	No. of VTCs with functioning agreements with private sector for practical training and/or internships.	0	At least 5		
	No. of management staff receiving management training per VTC.	0	15	Training reports, Training attendance sheets	
	No. of instructors receiving pedagogical training.	0	100		
Activity 1.3.5.1: Rehabilitate and re-equip at least X (e.g., 5-10) vocational training centres with modern machinery, tools, and training materials to ensure they can provide practical training.					
Activity 1.3.5.2: Sponsor partnerships between private sector and TVET centres so that they can offer venues for practical on-the-job training and internships.					
Activity 1.3.5.3: Strengthen the management and instructional capacity at these centres: provide leadership training for centre managers on planning and partnerships, and pedagogical training for instructors on competency-based training and modern technologies.					
Output 1.3.6: A nationwide public awareness campaign about the benefits of vocational and technical training conducted.	Percentage increase in youth enrolment in vocational training programmes.	0	40%	MoLSA, Ministry of education and Ministry of Youth reports	Key stakeholders (government ministries, educational institutions, media, and possibly the private sector) collaborate to launch and sustain a public-awareness campaign that can change perceptions about TVET. GOI will dedicate resources to media campaigns, outreach events, and possibly skills competitions to elevate the image of vocational training.
	Public awareness campaign conducted.	0	1		
Activity 1.3.6.1: Launch a nationwide awareness campaign via TV, social media, and community outreach featuring success stories of TVET graduates (including women and rural youth) who gained good jobs or started businesses, highlighting the value of hands-on skills thereby framing technical skills as pathways to stable income and entrepreneurship.					
Activity 1.3.6.2: Sponsor skills competitions (e.g., carpentry, green innovation) where youth showcase technical talents with prizes and media coverage. Engage famous businessowners, celebrities or influencers who resonate with youth to champion TVET on social media platforms.					
Strategic Priority 2: Improved job creation through economic diversification, business growth, and just transition					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Means of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Outcome 2.1: Diversified economic opportunities and just transition	- Number and value of new investments created in non-oil sectors - Number of new jobs created in non-oil sectors - # of enterprises adopting green business practices due to ILO's assistance. - # of MSMEs registered	TBD TBD 0 0	100 investm ents valued at \$50 million TBD 100 100	Ministry of Planning records MoLSA, MoP MoT, MoEnv MoT records and reports	Assumptions: The security situation and political stability in Iraq will continue to improve to attract investments. GOI commitment to legal and regulatory reform. - Risk: Limited private sector participation in green initiatives. - Limited interest in formalization among MSMEs Mitigation: Provide targeted incentives and financing options. - Simplify business registration and licensing to encourage MSME formalization. - Uncertainty in investment climate. - Strengthen investor confidence through regulatory stability and incentives.
Output 2.1.1: Comprehensive labour market situational analysis conducted.	National labour market assessment study completed and disseminated. Number of priority growth sectors identified for job creation as a result of the analysis	0 0	1 5	Published labour market report; workshop/conference proceedings. Labour market assessment report; policy briefs	Assumption: Findings will be utilized by policymakers (e.g., informing sector prioritization and skills development initiatives).
Activity 2.1.1.1: Conduct a thorough labour market diagnostic study mapping employment, unemployment, and skill patterns, and identifying X growth sectors (MoLSA, Ministry of Planning, national universities, ILO).					
Activity 2.1.1.2: Present the findings in a national conference and convene a working group for each of the five key sectors identified.					
Activity 2.1.1.3: Conduct Labour Force Survey (Ministry of Planning, MoLSA, CSOs, ILO)					
Activity 2.1.1.4: Establish comprehensive Labour Market Information System (Ministry of Planning, MoLSA, Central Statistical Organization, ILO)					
Activity 2.1.1.5: Organize annual National Labour Force conference bringing together government (MoP, Central Statistical Organization, MoLSA, Ministry of Youth, Ministry of Education), academia, employers, and trade unions.					
Output 2.1.2: Business Greening Program launched and operationalized.	Green enterprise support programme established with incentive mechanisms. Number of enterprises adopting eco-friendly practices with support from the programme	0 0	1 50	Government decree on Green Program; program guidelines Program monitoring reports; verification of green improvements	Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Finance and MoLSA, in partnership with chambers of commerce and development partners (e.g. UNDP), provide the necessary support and incentives (such as grants, tax breaks, or certification schemes) for enterprises to adopt sustainable practices.
Activity 2.1.2.1: Launch a Green Enterprise Development Program that encourages and assists businesses in the identified priority sectors to adopt environmentally sustainable practices and create green jobs (Ministry of Environment, MoLSA, IFI, UNDP).					
Activity 2.1.2.2: Develop a Green Business Action Plan outlining incentives such as certification, small grants, concessional loans or tax breaks for businesses implementing green innovations, energy efficiency measures, or waste reduction initiatives.					
Activity 2.1.2.3: Create a network of "Green Business Advisors" to support SMEs in sectors like solar energy, recycling, sustainable agriculture, etc., providing technical know-how and linking them to finance.					
Output 2.1.3: Supply chain development programmes integrating MSMEs operationalized.	Number of MSMEs newly integrated into formal supply chains because of the project. Number of new buyers-supplier contracts or market linkages facilitated for Iraqi MSMEs	0 0	50 30	Project reports tracking MSME linkages; buyer contract records	Effective collaboration between government and private sector to link local MSMEs with larger markets. GOI and industry chambers, together with international partners (such as EU programmes), commit resources to connect Iraqi MSMEs and cooperatives to domestic and international buyers Lead firms are open to sourcing from local suppliers. A stable trade environment and supportive regulations so that new market linkages can be sustained.
Activity 2.1.3.1: Design and launch a Supply Chain Linkages Project that connects through IFI the Iraqi MSMEs and cooperatives to larger domestic and international buyers (Ministry of Trade, MoLSA, IFI, USAID or EU trade support programmes).					
Activity 2.1.3.2: Identify a few pilot value chains, preferably in the priority sectors, and work with IFI and lead firms and small suppliers to improve product quality, standards compliance (e.g. ISO, HACCP, export standards), and reliability. This may include providing develop specific services in partnership with IFI and providing training for MSMEs on quality control and business processes and supporting them in obtaining certifications necessary for larger contracts.					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Activity 2.1.3.3: Facilitate trade linkages by organizing buyer-seller meets, virtual marketplaces and possibly trade missions. Supporting Export Promotion bureau at the IFI and organization of at least an annual exhibition (e.g. “Iraq Sourcing Expo”) where local producers can showcase products to potential buyers and investors from abroad.					
Outcome 2.2: Improved support to the Government of Iraq and private sector to boost job creation and decent work	# of MSMEs newly integrated into formal supply chains (Baseline: X, Target: Y by 2029).	TBD	TBD	Project reports	Assumptions: Political stability and cooperation between government entities and private sector actors will be maintained or improve. Employment centres will have sufficient resources and trained staff to function effectively. Risk: Weak institutional capacity to implement EIIP and supply chain development. Mitigation: Provide technical assistance and ensure coordination across government agencies. Risk: Limited financing for employment-intensive projects. Mitigation: Establish multi-donor trust funds to leverage international development financing.
	- % increase in government spending on employment-intensive investment programmes (Baseline: X%, Target: Y% by 2029).	TBD	TBD	MoP	
	- # of new infrastructure projects launched under EIIP and PWP frameworks (Baseline: X, Target: X+20 by 2029).	TBD	TBD	MoP, MoLSA records	
Output 2.2.1: Effective gender responsive and inclusive National Employment Policy developed, endorsed and implemented.	NEP developed and submitted to GOI for endorsement.	0	1	Taskforce meeting records, NEP document submitted for GOI endorsement.	Assumption: Strong political will to support the formulation and formal adoption of the NEP and ensure that the high-level tripartite task force is formed and remains engaged. GOI prioritizes employment creation in its national agenda and fast-tracks the NEP through necessary approvals.
	NEP formally endorsed by GOI	0	1	Council of Ministers resolution; official gazette publication	
	Activity 2.2.1.1: Involve a high-level Tripartite Task Force in the formulation of a National Employment Policy (NEP), ensuring alignment with Iraq’s Vision 2030 and National Development Plan.				
Output 2.2.2: Action plans addressing constraints in priority sectors collaboratively developed and implemented by the GoI and respective Chambers.	Number of public-private sector action plans for priority sectors jointly developed and adopted.	0	5	Official endorsement of each sector plan; implementation committees formed	Relevant chambers and GOI institutions remain committed to jointly developing and executing the sector action plans. Sufficient resources (public and private investment) are expected to be allocated to implement the agreed interventions in each priority sector. Both government and business leaders see mutual benefit in these plans, ensuring sustained engagement to overcome sector-specific constraints.
	Number of formal partnership agreements (MOUs) signed between Government and Chambers to implement	0	5	Signed MOU documents; public-private task force reports	
Activity 2.2.2.1: For each of the priority sectors identified, establish a Public-Private Task Force with representatives from the relevant ministry, the IFI, and if needed sectoral organizations, TUs, and other key stakeholders. These teams will meet frequently over 3-6 months to pinpoint critical constraints (e.g., lack of skilled labour, regulatory hurdles, infrastructure needs) and opportunities for expansion in their sector.					
Activity 2.2.2.2: Develop a Sector Action Plan for each of the priority sectors with specific interventions: e.g., upgrading value chains, improving market access, revising relevant regulations, investing in relevant infrastructure, and launching sector-specific training programmes. Assign responsibilities (Ministries, IFI, donor programmes) and timelines for each intervention. Once plans are agreed upon, formalize them via MOUs between the Government and the respective Chamber.					
Activity 2.2.2.3: Implement the plans with a mix of public funding and private investment and hold periodic review meetings to measure progress (jobs created, growth metrics) and resolve any implementation issues.					
Output 2.2.3: Sustainable Public Works Programme (PWP) designed and implemented.	Number of infrastructure projects launched under the PWP framework.	0	20	PWP progress reports; project lists (MoLSA/Ministry of Construction and/or relevant ministries).	The government champions a labour-intensive Public Works Programme (PWP) by providing policy support and funding. The national PWP is integrated into Iraq’s development plans, targeting infrastructure gaps and vulnerable groups as intended.
	Number of workdays generated through PWP projects (employment for workers)	0	100,000	PWP project employment records; ILO monitoring reports	
Activity 2.2.3.1: Develop a national Public Works Programme (PWP) focusing on labour-intensive projects to address infrastructure gaps and create jobs for vulnerable populations. Identify priority projects such as housing, rehabilitating rural roads, improving irrigation canals, afforestation, or community infrastructure (childcare centres, schools, clinics) where unskilled and semi-skilled labour can be employed en masse. Note: Preference to infrastructural projects that may serve the priority sectors.					
Activity 2.2.3.2: Pilot in selected governorates with high unemployment rates utilizing local government and NGOs for outreach and monitoring.					
Activity 2.2.3.3: Develop a “graduation strategy” for each project linking workers to longer-term opportunities.					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Output 2.2.4: Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) is institutionalized within national frameworks.	Inclusion of EIIP methodologies in national public investment policy. EIIP coordination unit or focal points established in government	0 0	1 1	Revised public investment guidelines, Ministry of Planning circulars. Government decision establishing EIIP unit; staffing orders	GOI adopts and mainstreams the EIIP approach in its public investment system.
Activity 2. 2.4.1: Integrate EIIP approach into Iraq's public investment policy. This entails revising public investment guidelines to give preference to labour-intensive methods where and when feasible. For example, when budgeting for infrastructure projects, require an analysis of job creation potential and incorporate EIIP techniques. Another measure is to require that a portion (e.g., 10-20%) of relevant capital project budgets are allocated to labour costs for local job creation.					
Activity 2. 2.4.2: Strengthen institutional capacity to implement and monitor EIIP through establishing an EIIP unit and/or designating focal points in key ministries and providing them with ILO EIIP training. In addition, develop standard templates and manuals (with ILO support) for engineers and planners. Also, incorporate EIIP indicators into the government's project monitoring system.					
Outcome 2.3. Improved development of MSMEs and formalization	Number of MSMEs formalized Number of public and private BDS providers offering formalization services Perception MSMEs on the existence of enabling business environment. Number of MSMEs accessing financial and non-financial services.	0 0 TBD TBD	1000 1 TBD 9,000	OSS records MoT, OSS records and reports MSMEs opinion survey Records of Financial Institutions and MFIs, Business Clinics, and OSSs	Assumptions: Sustained political willingness to introduce and follow on with necessary reforms. Stable economic conditions together with incentives will convince MSMEs of formalization and will facilitate their transition. Financial institutions will be convinced of the creditworthiness of MSMEs and will invest their own funds in MSME products. BDSs will continue to be adequately funded and accessible to MSMEs. Risks: - Lack of incentives for MSMEs to transition from the informal to the formal sector. - Limited access to finance for small enterprises. - Excessive cost of compliance for MSMEs. Mitigation: - Implement tax benefits and financial incentives for formalizing MSMEs. - Expand credit guarantee programmes to support small business financing. - Reduce regulatory burdens by streamlining business registration and compliance procedures.
Output 2.3.1: A unified MSME Development Policy Framework is developed and adopted.	Unified MSME policy framework drafted. Unified MSME policy framework officially approved by GoI	0 0	1 1	Draft policy document; stakeholder consultation records. Cabinet approval notice; Parliamentary approval	High-level support for the policy's approval, and allocation of resources for its rollout. Relevant ministries coordinate to consolidate existing MSME support measures and push the framework through to official adoption. The framework is aligned with national development strategies (such as the Private Sector Development Plan 2014-2030).
Activity 2.3.1.1: Draft a comprehensive unified MSME development policy framework that consolidates and streamlines all government support measures for MSMEs.					
Activity 2.3.1.2: Submit the MSME Development Policy for GOI approval and ensure its adoption by issuing a decree or incorporating it into a national economic plan and budget.					
Output 2.3.2: Enhanced MSMEs' access to finance in selected governorates.	Number of MSMEs receiving loans under improved financing schemes (credit guarantee, SME windows, etc.) Value of MSME products disbursed Repayment rate	X (TBD) X (TBD) X (TBD)	X+700 SMEs X+300 micro enterprises \$10 million Above 95%	Central bank and participating bank reports; ICBG records, MFIs reports.	The enabling environment (interest rates, banking regulations, and demand for credit) remains favourable, allowing these finance initiatives to take root and expand in the target governorates.
Activity 2.3.2.1: Cooperate with KfW, the Iraqi Company for Banking Guarantees (ICBG), and CBI to: Establish a SME window by selected private PFIs through their own capital funds, having an effective credit guarantee scheme in place, and the provision of technical assistance to capacitate the PFIs, ICBG, as well as the SMEs.					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Activity 2.3.2.2: Develop a Management Information System (MIS) to support and monitor financial services to MSMEs.					
Output 2.3.3: Improved MSMEs' access to Business Development Services (BDS) in selected governorates.	Number of BDS centres (one-stop “business clinics”).	0	5	Project reports; site verifications visits	Authorities, along with business associations or chambers, support the creation of BDS centres in key cities and possibly mobile or digital BDS outreach for rural areas. Entrepreneurs are aware of the benefits and there is a culture of entrepreneurship that encourages using professional business support, ensuring the BDS centres are well-utilized and effective.
	Number of entrepreneurs (incl. women, rural) benefiting from BDS services (training, mentoring).	(X) TBD	X+500	BDS centre client registries; training attendance logs	
	Client satisfaction with BDS services	TBD	Above 85%	BDS clients survey, post-service clients' evaluation forms	
Activity 2.3.3.1: Establish Business Development Service Centres (business clinics) in key cities (Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, etc.) where entrepreneurs can access training, mentoring, legal advice, and market linkages under one roof.					
Activity 2.3.3.2: Implement a range of BDS programmes: entrepreneurship training, mentorship schemes pairing new entrepreneurs with experienced business owners, and sector-specific advisory services. Ensure outreach to rural areas via mobile BDS clinics or digital platforms.					
Output 2.3.4: Enhanced capacities of cooperatives in governance and financial management.	Number of cooperatives in priority sectors completing governance & management training	0	10	Training program records; participant lists	Target cooperatives and supporting institutions are committed to improving cooperative governance. There is an enabling environment for cooperatives in Iraq. Cooperatives in priority sectors willing to participate in capacity-building programmes, and to apply improved governance and financial practices.
	Percentage of trained cooperatives adopting improved governance practices (regular audits, democratic elections)	0	100%	Follow-up cooperative assessments; audit reports	
Activity 2.3.4.1: Roll out a Cooperative Capacity Enhancement Program across a small group of various cooperative types (agricultural, artisanal, service) focusing on the ones operating in the priority sectors. Focus on good governance, financial management, and business operations. Use ILO's MATCOM and My.COOP training materials. Topics also include democratic governance, transparent accounting, attracting members, offering value-added services to members, member participation, and value chain integration.					
Activity 2.3.4.2: Provide complementary assistance in facilitating partnerships with international cooperative alliances to provide mentorship to Iraqi cooperatives. Note: Consider giving them a loan through the SME lending project, if their internal systems are reliable and if they qualify for and need the loan.					
Activity 2.3.4.3: Providing assistance to enable cooperatives to join national or international supply chains.					
Output 2.3.5: Enabling environment for the establishment, operation, and growth of sustainable enterprises is improved.	Number of one-stop shop facilities for business registration and licensing piloted.	0	5	Project reports; OSS launch announcements, field visits.	Political commitment to streamline business regulations and piloting one-stop shops in select provinces. Political willingness to introduce new legislation.
	New or amended MSME legislation enacted providing incentives for formalization.	0	1	Text of new MSME law or amendments; official gazette, parliamentary records.	
	Proportion of workers in informal employment (overall economy)	68% (2023)	60%	Labour Force Surveys; ILOSTAT data	



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Activity 2.3.5.1: Review and revise laws/regulations on MSME establishment and operation to eliminate redundancies and excessive requirements.
Activity 2.3.5.2: Facilitate business registration and licensing process by piloting a limited number of One-Stop Shops (OSS) for MSME Licensing and registration in X governorates, where entrepreneurs can complete all procedures (registration, tax ID, social security enrolment, municipal licenses) in a single location.
Activity 2.3.5.3: Propose and advocate for a new MSME Law or amendments to existing laws that provide incentives for formalization and growth. Key provisions could include tax incentives or grace periods for newly formalized businesses, simplified accounting requirements for small enterprises, facilitation of access to industrial land, and preferential procurement policies (e.g., allocate at least 10% of government procurement to MSMEs, or extra evaluation points for bidders partnering with MSMEs). The law should incorporate input from business associations.
Strategic priority 3: Improved quality of work and rights-based social protection

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Outcome 3.1: Improved social dialogue and collective bargaining	- % increase in collective bargaining agreements signed annually. - # of tripartite dialogue platforms operational at national and sectoral levels (Baseline: X, Target: X+5 by 2029). - % increase in labour disputes resolved through social dialogue mechanisms (Baseline: X%, Target: X+40% by 2029).	X (TBD) X (TBD) X (TBD)	X+30% X+5 X+30%	MoLSA records Policy and dialogue Forums records	Assumptions: Legal frameworks will support agreements reached through social dialogue and collective bargaining. Tripartite structures will receive government and international support for long-term sustainability. Government commitment to implementing policies that enhance social dialogue will remain firm. Risk: Lack of political willingness to officially recognize independent TUs. Mitigation: Engage in a dialogue with the GOI and parliament over the issue.
Output 3.1.1: A more enabling environment for tripartite decision-making is created.	Labour law amended to strengthen freedom of association and collective bargaining rights. National tripartite consultative body (e.g. Economic & Social Council) established and meeting regularly	0 0	1 1	Official gazette publication of amended labour law; ILO supervisory observations. Government decree establishing the body; meeting minutes (biannual)	GOI (especially the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Parliament) remains committed to labour law reforms that support independent trade unions and institutionalize tripartite dialogue. Key social partners (trade unions and employer associations) actively participate in new dialogue platforms. The National Social Dialogue Forum launched in 2025 must be sustained as an inclusive mechanism for social dialogue.
Activity 3.1.1.1: Strengthen the legal and institutional framework for social dialogue by reviewing and revising labour legislation to better support independent trade unions and employers' organizations.					
Activity 3.1.1.2: Establish a National Tripartite Consultation Committee (or Economic and Social Council) with representatives from government, employers, and independent trade unions. Institutionalize its role mandating regular meetings (e.g., biannually) to discuss labour market reforms, wage policies, and social protection issues. The committee should have a secretariat to follow-up and ensure its recommendations are formally recorded and considered by the Cabinet, thereby creating a sustained mechanism for tripartite dialogue.					
Activity 3.1.1.3: Continue to advocate for the GOI's practical recognition of the independent TUs.					
Output 3.1.2: Social partners' engagement in social dialogue strengthened.	Number of sectoral or regional social dialogue forums convened annually with active union and employer participation. Number of trade union and employer representatives trained in collective bargaining and dialogue skills	0 0	At least 3 forums per year. 200 representatives (cumulative) by 2029	Forum reports; attendance records (disaggregated by gender/youth). Training workshop reports; participant lists (disaggregated by gender/youth).	Trade unions and employer organizations are willing and able to engage constructively in social dialogue and collective bargaining, making use of enhanced skills from capacity-building programmes. The legal and institutional framework continues to protect and encourage free collective bargaining. Social dialogue and collective bargaining proceed with no political or managerial interference.
Activity 3.1.2.1: Conduct capacity-building programmes for social partners on effective engagement in social dialogue and negotiation. For trade unions: provide training on collective bargaining strategy, contract negotiation, and organizing. For employers: provide training on constructive industrial relations and mutual gains bargaining. Enhanced skills and understanding will embolden these actors to pursue and conclude collective agreements at enterprise and sector levels, improving labour relations climate.					
Activity 3.1.2.2: Facilitate regular Social Dialogue Forums at sectoral or regional levels. Ensure women and youth representatives are included within social partner delegations. Document and disseminate successful outcomes (like resolution of a dispute or improvements in work conditions) to build confidence in social dialogue as a tool for conflict resolution and policy shaping.					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Output 3.1.3: Capacity of employers' organizations and trade unions to expand discussions internally among membership is developed.	Number of initiatives implemented by employers' organizations and trade unions to improve internal communication and develop membership engagement strategies.	X (TBD)	X+10	Reports, strategic plans, internal communication initiatives (mobile apps, newsletters, interactive platforms), feedback surveys from members.	Trade unions and employers commit to internal democratic reforms and inclusive engagement. Major trade union federations improve unity and coordination (rather than remaining fragmented), building on initiatives like the 2019 Trade Union Committee (established with ILO support) to collaborate across federations.
	Number of members (disaggregated by Sex and youth) actively participating in dialogue platforms within employers' organizations and trade unions.	X to be established through initial members survey.	X+50%	Membership records, participation lists, meeting minutes, reports on member engagement activities	
	Percentage increase in member satisfaction regarding internal governance and inclusiveness within employers' organizations and trade unions.	X to be established through initial members survey.	X+40%	Member satisfaction surveys, evaluation forms, qualitative reports from internal governance reviews.	
Activity 3.1.3.1: Support internal strengthening of trade unions and employers' organizations by providing training on democratic governance, leadership development, membership recruitment, and retention strategies. A special focus will be on engaging underrepresented groups (like women, youth, informal workers, or small enterprises) within these organizations, ensuring their concerns are reflected in the dialogue process.					
Activity 3.1.3.2: Invest in modern communication and membership engagement tools: help trade unions and employers' organizations develop mobile apps, newsletters, and interactive websites and social media to gather members' feedback and share information on dialogue outcomes. For instance, implement a digital "member poll" system that allows members to voice their priorities ahead of negotiations, or a platform for members to discuss and provide input on draft collective agreements. As these organizations improve transparency and two-way communication, their legitimacy and the breadth of issues they bring to social dialogue will expand.					
Outcome 3.2: Improved application of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW)	- Number of labour law violations identified and resolved.	X (TBD)	X+1000	MoLSA records	Assumptions: Regulatory frameworks for FPRW enforcement will be strengthened, and labour violations will be consistently monitored. Employers will be willing to comply with FPRW regulations. GOI has the political willingness to ratify International Labour Standards (ILS) and discharge reporting obligations. - Risk: Weak enforcement of labour laws. - Mitigation: Strengthen labour inspection and reporting mechanisms, including digital case management.
	- Percentage increase in formal labour contracts. - # of cases in violation of occupational safety standards.	X (TBD) X (TBD)	X+30% TBD		
Output 3.2.1: Strengthened labour governance in labour, OSH and social security inspection.	Percentage of workers officially included to total number of members of labour/OSH inspection committees.	X (TBD)	X+35%	Ministry of Labour records; committee appointment decrees.	Assumptions The Government is committed to acknowledging and supporting an increasing role for labour in the governance of inspection systems. The security situation remains stable enough for inspectors to operate nationwide.
	Digital labour inspection case-management system developed and in use	0	1	Labour inspectorate IT reports; inspection database audits	
Activity 3.2.1.1: Train TUs and Employers organizations on labour, OSH and social security inspection to become more effective members of the inspection committees and to expand their numbers in these committees.					
Activity 3.2.1.2: Develop digital inspection systems to track compliance and violations in real time.					
Output 3.2.2: Increased effectiveness of labour justice.	Average time to resolve labour dispute cases in courts.	~12 months (2024)	≤6 months by 2029	Judiciary statistics; court management reports.	The Supreme Judiciary Council prioritize labour disputes and agrees to partner with ILO on ADR mechanisms and training of judges and lawyers. There are political will and capacity to enforce court decisions on labour cases promptly. Employers and workers trust and utilize judicial and ADR mechanisms.
	Specialized alternative dispute resolution (ADR) units for labour conflicts established and utilized.	0	At least 5 ADR centres	Ministry of Justice reports; ADR case records	
	Courts and ADR decisions are implemented without delays.	X (TBD)	X-50%	MoLSA records	



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Activity 3.2.2.1: Offer regular training to judges through the Supreme Judiciary Council to train judges on labour-related laws and regulations, ILS and court cases. This may involve overseas study tours.					
Activity 3.2.2.2: Train lawyers on court cases and labour-related laws and regulations and ILS.					
Activity 3.2.2.3: Enhance the capacity of labour courts or dedicated labour judges where formal adjudication is needed. Provide these courts with streamlined procedures (like small claims processes for minor wage disputes) and ensure enforcement of judgments is prompt. Hold regular workshops for judges and labour lawyers to share the latest developments in labour law and international jurisprudence.					
Activity 3.2.2.4: Establish specialized Alternate Labour Dispute Resolution units in key regions to offer mediation and arbitration services for workplace disputes. Train mediators/arbitrators (possibly drawn from experienced former judges or industrial relations experts) to provide quick, fair resolution of disputes such as unfair dismissals or wage arrears. The goal is to resolve disputes within 1-3 months through ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution), reducing the burden on courts.					
Activity 3.2.2.5: Introduce safe and accessible complaints and reporting mechanisms for workers to raise grievances or report violations.					
Activity 3.2.2.6: Ensure that court and ADR decisions are implemented promptly without delays, possibly by post-judgement inspection.					
Output 3.2.3: Reduced prevalence of child labour and all forms of forced labour.	% of children aged 5-14 years engaged in child Labour.	5 (2018)	4	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)	Law enforcement agencies actively enforce child labour laws and anti-forced labour regulations. Authorities will continue regular inspections in sectors prone to child & forced labour and that they provide support services (education and livelihood programmes) to families, so children aren't compelled to work. Additionally, this assumes community awareness and cooperation – families, employers, and local leaders must support efforts to eliminate child labour and trafficking.
	Number of child labour and forced labour inspections conducted in high-risk sectors	0 (MoLSA Reports, 2023)	500 inspections conducted by 2029	MoLSA Labour Inspection Reports	
Activity 3.2.3.1: Support Intensifying labour inspections in sectors known for child labour (brick factories, agriculture, street work, small workshops).					
Activity 3.2.3.2: Strengthen law enforcement by training police and labour inspectors in identifying forced labour.					
Activity 3.2.3.3: Scaling up bridging education and rehabilitation services for child workers and improving livelihoods of families to address root causes.					
Activity 3.2.3.4: Introduce supply chain governance regulations that discourage and penalize the use of child and forced labour by suppliers. For instance, build the capacity of IFI as main employers' organization to support companies above a certain size to conduct due diligence in their supply chains and report on labour standards. Encourage adoption of labels or certifications for "child-labour free" products. Support IFI to provide guidance and tools to businesses to help them monitor and remediate labour issues in their supply chains. Recognize companies that maintain clean supply chains with an annual "Decent Work Award" to promote voluntary compliance.					
Output 3.2.4: Enhanced awareness of workers rights including equality and non discrimination, OSH that includes safety from violence and harassment.	Number of workers trained on OSH and labour rights.	100 workers (MoLSA Training Reports, 2023).	1,000 workers trained by 2029	MoLSA Training Records, Employer Reports	Assumption: MoLSA and partners (Ministry of Education) will support integrating OSH and workers' rights training into curricula and orientation programmes.
	Number of companies adopting internal OSH training programmes in collaboration with IFI	10	100	Enterprise OSH Compliance Reports	
Activity 3.2.4.1: Conduct a Decent Work Rights and Safety Awareness Campaign including awareness on equality, non-discrimination, free from violence and harassment, decent work for domestic workers, etc. targeting workers and employers.					
Activity 3.2.4.2: Work with educational institutions and companies to integrate work rights and OSH training in their curriculum.					
Activity 3.2.4.3: Collaborate with IFI and their regional chambers to develop a service encouraging companies, (especially in construction and manufacturing) to provide mandatory OSH and rights orientation for all new recruitment.					
Activity 3.2.4.4: Collaborate with unions to have peer educators in workplaces who inform colleagues about their rights and safe work practices.					
Output 3.2.5: Enhanced capacities of regulatory bodies to ensure that work and OSH regulations are adequately implemented.	Number of regulatory personnel trained on OSH enforcement.	50 inspectors (MoLSA Reports, 2023).	200 inspectors trained by 2029	The government remains committed to strengthening regulatory bodies.	Assumption: Continued political will to give Iraq's relevant regulatory bodies the mandate to exercise their responsibilities and resources to strengthen their capacity. It is also assumed that different agencies and departments will cooperate to avoid overlap and fill gaps.
	Number of coordinated multi-agency inspections conducted	500	2,000 by 2029	MoLSA and Labour Inspectorate reports	
Activity 3.2.5.1: Strengthen the institutional capacity of MoLSA's departments responsible for setting and enforcing labour and OSH standards. This includes updating regulations in line with international standards and training regulatory staff on compliance monitoring techniques. Develop clear operational manuals for enforcing each regulation to standardize practice across regions.					
Activity 3.2.5.2: Foster inter-agency coordination between labour inspectorate, social security inspectors, and other relevant bodies (like environmental inspectors where OSH overlaps). Establish a joint task force that conducts coordinated inspections in high-risk sectors (like construction or oil facilities) to cover all aspects of compliance in one go.					
Activity 3.2.5.3: Provide cross-training so that, for example, social security officers can spot basic OSH issues and alert the labour inspectorate, and vice versa. This holistic approach will ensure comprehensive enforcement of work standards and reduce regulatory gaps.					
Activity 3.2.5.4: Digitize and link databases of labour and OSH inspection for better enforcement and easier identification of offenders. If possible, implement an e-inspection system where inspectors use tablets or their smart mobile phones to record findings and issue notices, linked to a central database for tracking compliance and repeat offenses.					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Activity 3.2.5.5: Issue regional annual reports summarizing inspection results and compliance rates by sector, to increase transparency and encourage better self-compliance among employers.					
Activity 3.2.5.6: Promote specific awareness campaigns in collaboration with IFI and sectoral organizations about OSH standards, including developing guidelines, manuals and practical tools allowing HR managers and business owners to conduct self-assessment checks and also informs their workers on main OSH preventive measures.					
Output 3.2.6: National capacity to ratify International Labour Standards (ILS) and discharge reporting obligations strengthened.	Number of new ILO Conventions ratified by Iraq	0	3 New ILO Conventions ratified by 2029	ILO Ratification Database	The GOI maintains a strong commitment to international labour standards, to pursue the ratification of new ILO conventions and fulfil reporting obligations.
	Number of government officials trained on ILO reporting obligations	50	200	Training attendance records	
Activity 3.2.6.1: Conduct a comprehensive review of unratified ILO Conventions to identify which could be beneficial for Iraq to ratify. Develop a prioritized ratification plan endorsed by the tripartite constituents, targeting at least 3-5 new ratifications by the end of the DWCP.					
Activity 3.2.6.2: Conduct orientations for policymakers and social partners on the importance of ILS ratification and compliance.					
Activity 3.2.6.3: Continuous advocacy for ratification of ILS.					
Activity 3.2.6.4: Prepare ratification packages including gap analyses and draft legislative amendments to ensure compliance once ratified.					
Activity 3.2.6.5: Strengthen the national mechanism for reporting on ILS: form a dedicated ILS Reporting Committee. Build capacity by training this committee on ILO reporting guidelines, including how to incorporate input from employers’ and workers’ organizations in the reports.					
Outcome 3.3: Improved rights-based life cycle approach to social protection	Percentage increase of effective private social security coverage.	12.65%.	21%	Administrative data of Social Security Administrations compared to private sector employment based on latest Labour Force Surveys.	Government commitment and resource allocation to social protection will remain strong. Social protection programmes will be successfully restructured to align with rights-based approaches. Sufficient budget allocations will be made to expand lifecycle-based social protection initiatives. Increased public awareness and accessibility will encourage vulnerable populations to enrol in social protection programmes. Risks: - Fragmentation of social protection programmes. - Low coverage of informal workers in social security systems. - Financial sustainability concerns for expanded social protection. Mitigation: - Integrate social security and social assistance databases for better coordination. - Expand coverage of informal workers through incentives and flexible contribution schemes. - Secure long-term funding commitments for social protection programmes.
		5%	15%		
	Percentage increase in government expenditure on lifecycle-based social protection.		50%		
	Percentage increase in women and marginalized groups covered by social protection programmes	25% (National Social Protection Strategy, 2023)	45%		
	Proportion of population covered by at least one social protection benefit (insurance or assistance)	41.7% (2022)			
Output 3.3.1: Inclusive, sustainable, and equitable social security strategic framework designed and operationalized.	Integrated digital system developed and piloted in three governorates with GOI approval.	0	1	Reports on pilot initiative, system integration test reports; unified beneficiary registry.	GOI demonstrates political commitment to social security reforms and digital integration. Relevant institutions collaborate effectively to integrate databases and administrative procedures.
	GOI adopts the integrated system nationwide.	0	1	MoLSA decree	
Activity 3.3.1.1: Develop and implement a social security digitization and interoperability plan to improve operations and reduce fragmentation. Introduce a unified beneficiary registry and link social insurance with social assistance databases so that individuals transition smoothly between programmes (e.g., when an unemployed person finds a job, they move from assistance to insurance, and vice versa), and limit abuse of the system.					
Activity 3.3.1.2: Pilot the integrated system in select regions before scaling up.					



Annex 1: DWCP results matrix - Iraq (2026-2029)

Results chain	Performance indicators	Baseline (2026)	Target (2029)	Source/Mean of verification	Assumption/Risk statement
Output 3.3.2: Institutional capacity to identify, address, and reduce barriers to access to social security enhanced.	National assessment conducted to identify key barriers to social security access.	0	1	Published assessment; action plan for removing barriers.	GOI institutions are committed to simplifying administrative processes and addressing identified barriers promptly. Cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors is strong, facilitating smooth operations at the local level.
	Number of social security helpdesks or outreach centres established in local communities.	0	10	Ministry progress reports; site visits verifying helpdesk operations	
	Number of staff trained	0	200	Project reports, training attendance sheets	
	Activity 3.3.2.1: Conduct an assessment to identify key barriers to social security access – administrative, informational, financial, or legal.				
Activity 3.3.2.2: Set up a task force dedicated to outreach and inclusion, which includes social partners and civil society.					
Activity 3.3.2.3: Provide training and resources to social security staff and community NGOs to assist potential beneficiaries. Develop user-friendly guides in local languages explaining entitlements and procedures.					
Activity 3.3.2.4: Increase on-the-ground presence by creating help desks in local NGOs and integrate social security advisory services into regional/local employment centres.					
Output 3.3.3: Improved Social partners engagement in social protection governance and coverage expansion.	Number of social protection schemes (pensions, unemployment, etc.) whose governing boards include employers' and workers' representatives.	0	3	Statutes of social protection schemes.	Social partners (employer organizations, trade unions) are willing and capable of participating effectively in governance structures. Government recognizes and supports the role of social partners in social protection governance.
	Joint government-social partner awareness campaigns on social insurance registration conducted	0	3	Campaign materials; reports from employers' and workers' organizations	
	No. of workers registered in the social insurance database	200,000	2 million	MoLSA Social Insurance Database	
	Activity 3.3.3.1: Formalize the role of trade unions and employers' organizations in the governance of social protection funds (pensions, unemployment, health insurance). Ensure legislation or regulations provide for their representation on boards or oversight committees of social insurance schemes.				
Activity 3.3.3.2: Conduct joint awareness campaigns by government and social partners highlighting the importance of registering workers for social insurance.					
Activity 3.3.3.3: Enhance awareness among business owners of the social insurance law's provisions to cover women's salaries during pregnancy and childbirth.					
Activity 3.3.3.4: Capacity Building for Social Partners in Social Protection Governance.					
Activity 3.3.3.5: Strengthening Monitoring and Accountability Mechanisms for Social Protection Funds					
Activity 3.3.3.6: Implement a national "Register Your Worker" campaign to boost enrolment in social insurance. Set concrete targets per year. Use mobile units and digital platforms to simplify registration, allowing employers to register workers online. For workers, highlight the tangible benefits of registration (access to healthcare, pensions, etc.) through success stories and peer educators.					
Activity 3.3.3.7: Introduce incentives and penalties: for employers, offer a temporary reduction in contributions or public recognition for those registering all their eligible workers. Conversely, increase penalties for those evading registration.					
Output 3.3.4: Improved coordination between social assistance and social insurance programmes to ensure no one is left behind.	Formal mechanism established for transitioning individuals from social assistance to social insurance.	0	1	Government resolution; SOPs for transitions between programmes.	Relevant government bodies collaborate effectively to streamline services and administrative procedures. Beneficiaries trust and use the single-window service, leading to greater enrolment and coverage.
Activity 3.3.4.1: Link the databases of Social Insurance with that of Social Assistance and create a coordination mechanism (e.g., a joint committee) between the agencies running social assistance and social insurance. The committee will identify overlaps and gaps, ensuring individuals transitioning out of poverty programmes into formal jobs are smoothly integrated into social insurance, and those who lose jobs can access assistance without delay.					
Activity 3.3.4.2: Pilot a "single window" service for social protection at local centres where citizens can apply for all benefits at once (single application for social assistance, and insurance enrolment). Evaluate by tracking how many people benefit from multiple programmes seamlessly (e.g., an ex-beneficiary of cash transfers now receiving unemployment or pension benefits due to better coordination), thereby operationalizing the leave-no-one-behind principle in social protection.					



Annex 2: Alignment between DWCP 2026–2029 and UNSDCF 2025–2029

This annex presents a clear mapping between the DWCP Strategic Priorities and Outcomes and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2025–2029 outcomes. Where applicable, UNSDCF outcome statements are presented verbatim, in accordance with quality assurance guidance.



DWCP Strategic Priority & outcomes (2026–2029)	UNSDCF Strategic Priority & outcome (2025–2029)	Nature of Alignment
Strategic Priority 1: Improved market-relevant skills and inclusive employment	UNSDCF Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive social development Outcome 1: “by 2029, people in Iraq, particularly women, girls, children, youth, and groups in vulnerable situations, benefit from improved access to high-quality, inclusive, accessible, and equitable social services and a functional, responsive, and rights-based social protection system.” UNSDCF Strategic Priority 2: sustainable economic development, livelihoods & employment outcome 2: “by 2029, people in Iraq, benefit from more resilient livelihoods and decent work opportunities resulting from a more diversified, inclusive, sustainable, green, and equitable economic development.”	DWCP contributes through employment services, equitable labour market access, skills development, and inclusive pathways for women and youth.
Outcome 1.1: Modern and efficient employment support services aligned with market needs	UNSDCF Outcome 2 (selected output and indicators on employment)	Reinforces improved employability and access to employment opportunities. “Employment support services aligned with market needs” closely matches UNSDCF Output 2.3 on “employment service institutions, are improved so that people, have relevant demand-driven training, skills, that meet emerging labour market needs.”
Outcome 1.2: Reduced barriers to equal access in the labour market	UNSDCF Outcomes 2 & 1 (gender equality, social inclusion)	Advances inclusion for vulnerable groups. “Reduced barriers to equal access in the labour market” is aligned with that of UNSDCF Outcome 1 “people in Iraq, particularly women, girls, children, youth, and vulnerable populations, benefit from improved access to high-quality, inclusive, accessible, and equitable social services”
Outcome 1.3: Improved access to quality and market-relevant education and skills for youth	UNSDCF Strategic Priority 2: Sustainable Economic Development, Livelihoods & Employment Outcome 2: “By 2029, people in Iraq ... benefit from more resilient livelihoods and decent work opportunities resulting from a more diversified, inclusive, sustainable, green, and equitable economic development.”	Direct contribution through TVET strengthening, skills for green jobs, youth employability. “market-relevant education and skills for youth” matches with UNSDCF Output 2.3, which refers to “women and youth, have relevant demand-driven training, skills, and experience that meet current and emerging labour market needs.”
Strategic Priority 2: Improved job creation through economic diversification, business growth and just transition	UNSDCF Strategic Priority 2: Sustainable Economic Development, Livelihoods & Employment Outcome 2 (verbatim as above)	Full alignment: diversification, MSMEs, private sector enabling environment, job creation, just transition.
Outcome 2.1: Diversified economic opportunities and just transition	UNSDCF Outcome 2 (innovation, diversification, decent work indicators)	Supports economic resilience and green transitions. DWCP 2.1 refers to “diversified economic opportunities and just transition,” which matches UNSDCF 2 “diversified and equitable economic development.”
Outcome 2.2: Improved support to government and private sector job creation	UNSDCF Outcome 2	Reinforces an enabling environment for employment and private sector reform. Outcome 2.2 of the DWCP matches Output 2.1 of the UNSDCF: “private sector development, particularly ... job-intensive sectors.”
Outcome 2.3: Improved development of MSMEs and formalization	UNSDCF Outcome 2 (indicators on informality, enterprise growth, women in business)	Strengthens MSME ecosystem, financial inclusion, and formalization. Outcome 2.3 of the DWCP is aligned with Output 2.1 and Output 2.3 of the UNSDCF which state “Increased capacities, private sector development, particularly for MSMEs”; and “Private sector enterprises, improve their performance, competitiveness, resilience, and survivability.”, respectively.
Strategic Priority 3: Improved quality of work and rights-based social protection	UNSDCF Strategic Priority 1: Inclusive social development (social protection component) UNSDCF Strategic Priority 4: Good governance, rule of Law & human rights Outcome 4: “By 2029, people in Iraq, benefit from transparent, accountable, inclusive, and effective governance in institutions that enhance peace, the rule of law, and human rights.”	Alignment through extension of social protection coverage, rights-based systems, and integrated lifecycle approaches. Alignment through labour law enforcement, labour inspection digitalization, ILS compliance, social dialogue institutions.
Outcome 3.1: Improved social dialogue and collective bargaining	UNSDCF Outcome 4	Supports institutional strengthening and participatory governance.
Outcome 3.2: Improved application of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work	UNSDCF Outcome 4 (human rights, rule of law)	Direct normative alignment.
Outcome 3.3: Improved rights-based life-cycle social protection	UNSDCF Outcome 1 (social protection)	Reinforces expansion and system integration of social protection. Outcome 3.3 of the DWCP matches with that of Output 1.3 of the UNSDCF “Social protection systems have improved institutional capacities and resources, underpinned by national policies, strategies, and legislation, that improve availability of comprehensive, sustainable, and equitable social protection for all, particularly the most vulnerable populations.”



Annex 3: Ratification of ILS

Category	Convention	Date	Status	Note
Freedom of association	C011 – Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921	01 Apr 1985	In Force	—
	C087 – Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948	01 Jun 2018	In Force	—
	C098 – Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949	27 Nov 1962	In Force	—
	C135 – Workers’ Representatives Convention, 1971	27 Jul 1972	In Force	—
Forced labour	C029 – Forced Labour Convention, 1930	27 Nov 1962	In Force	—
	C105 – Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957	15 Jun 1959	In Force	—
Child labour	C015 – Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921	19 Apr 1966	Not in force	Abrogated (ILC 2017)
	C059 – Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937	05 Jul 1960	Not in force	Automatically denounced (C138)
	C077 – Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry), 1946	13 Jan 1951	In Force	—
	C078 – Medical Examination of Young Persons (Non -Industrial), 1946	01 Jul 1960	In Force	—
	C138 – Minimum Age Convention, 1973	13 Feb 1985	In Force	Minimum age: 15
	C182 – Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999	09 Jul 2001	In Force	—
Equality	C100 – Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951	28 Aug 1963	In Force	—
	C111– Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958	15 Jun 1959	In Force	—
Tripartite consultation	C144 – Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976	11 Sep 1978	In Force	—
Labour administration	C081 – Labour Inspection Convention, 1947	13 Jan 1951	In Force	—
	C150 – Labour Administration Convention, 1978	10 Jul 1980	In Force	—
Employment policy	C088 – Employment Service Convention, 1948	22 Jun 1951	In Force	—
	C122 – Employment Policy Convention, 1964	02 Mar 1970	In Force	—
Vocational training	C140 – Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974	09 May 1978	In Force	—
	C142 – Human Resources Development Convention, 1975	26 Jul 1978	In Force	—
Wages	C026 – Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928	26 Nov 1962	In Force	—
	C095 – Protection of Wages Convention, 1949	12 May 1960	In Force	—
	C131– Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970	16 May 1974	In Force	—
Working time	C001 – Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919	24 Aug 1965	In Force	—
	C014 – Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921	12 May 1960	In Force	—
	C030 – Hours of Work (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1930	26 Nov 1962	In Force	—
	C041 – Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1934	28 Mar 1938	Not in force	Abrogated (ILC 2017)
	C052 – Holidays with Pay Convention, 1936	12 May 1960	Not in force	Automatically denounced by C132
	C089 – Night Work (Women) Convention (Revised), 1948	17 Nov 1967	In Force	—
	C106 – Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957	05 Jul 1960	In Force	—
	C132 – Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970	19 Feb 1974	In Force	—
	C153 – Hours of Work and Rest Periods (Road Transport), 1979	17 Apr 1985	In Force	—
	C013 – White Lead (Painting) Convention, 1921	19 Apr 1966	Not in force	—
OSH	C115 – Radiation Protection Convention, 1960	26 Oct 1962	In Force	—
	C119 – Guarding of Machinery Convention, 1963	08 Mar 1967	In Force	—
	C120 – Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1964	06 Mar 1987	In Force	—
	C136 – Benzene Convention, 1971	27 Jul 1972	In Force	—
	C139 – Occupational Cancer Convention, 1974	31 Mar 1978	In Force	—
	C148 – Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977	17 Apr 1985	In Force	—
	C167 – Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988	17 Sep 1990	In Force	—
	C184 – Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention, 2001	21 May 2021	In Force	—
	C187 – Promotional Framework for OSH Convention, 2006	21 Dec 2015	In Force	—
	C017 – Workmen’s Compensation (Accidents), 1925	05 Jul 1960	In Force	—
	C018 – Workmen’s Compensation (Occupational Diseases), 1925	26 Nov 1960	In Force	—



Annex 3: Ratification of ILS

Social security	C019 – Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation), 1925	30 Apr 1940	In Force	—
	C042 – Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) (Revised), 1934	25 Jul 1941	In Force	—
	C102 – Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952	22 Mar 2023	In Force	—
	C118 – Equality of Treatment (Social Security), 1962	28 Apr 1978	In Force	Accepted branches (a)–(g)
Social policy	C094 – Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949	25 Apr 1986	In Force	—
	C008 – Unemployment Indemnity (Shipwreck) Convention, 1920	19 Apr 1966	Not in force	Abrogated (ILC 2021)
Seafarers	C016 – Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea), 1921	19 Apr 1966	Not in force	Abrogated (ILC 2021)
	C022 – Seamen's Articles of Agreement, 1926	04 Oct 1962	Not in force	Auto-denounced (MLC 2006)
	C023 – Repatriation of Seamen, 1926	23 Sep 1962	Not in force	Auto - denounced (MLC 2006)
	C058 – Minimum Age (Sea), 1936	30 Dec 1959	Not in force	Automatically denounced by C138
	C092 – Accommodation of Crews (Revised), 1949	01 Dec 1977	Not in force	Auto - denounced (MLC 2006)
	C093 – Wages, Hours of Work and Manning (Sea), 1949	15 Aug 1985	Not in force	—
	C108 – Seafarers' Identity Documents Convention, 1958	23 Sep 1986	Not in force	Auto-denounced (C185)
	C109 – Wages, Hours of Work and Manning (Sea), 1958	23 Sep 1986	Not in force	—
	C145 – Continuity of Employment (Seafarers), 1976	14 Nov 1979	Not in force	Abrogated (ILC 2021)
	C146 – Seafarers' Annual Leave with Pay, 1976	15 Feb 1985	Not in force	Auto denounced (MLC 200)
	C147 – Merchant Shipping (Minimum Standards), 1976	15 Feb 1985	Not in force	Auto denounced (MLC 200)
	C185 – Seafarers' Identity Documents (Revised), 2003	21 May 2021	In Force	—
	MLC, 2006 – Maritime Labour Convention	22 Mar 2023	In Force	Includes 2016 amendments
	C027 – Marking of Weight (Packages), 1929	21 Nov 1966	In Force	—
Dockworkers	C137 – Dock Work Convention, 1973	09 Mar 1978	In Force	—
	C152 – Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work), 1979	17 Apr 1985	In Force	—
Indigenous peoples	C107 – Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957	16 Jul 1986	In Force	—
Specific workers	C149 – Nursing Personnel Convention, 1977	04 Jun 1980	In Force	—
	C172 – Working Conditions (Hotels and Restaurants), 1991	09 Jul 2001	In Force	—
Final Articles	C080 – Final Articles Revision Convention, 1946	09 Sep 1947	In Force	—
	C116 – Final Articles Revision Convention, 1961	26 Oct 1962	In Force	—



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Annex 4: Gender theory of change

TOC component	Detailed description	Key actions / Mechanisms	Indicators / Evidence of progress	Assumptions	Risks & mitigation measures
Problem statement	Women in Iraq face significant structural, socio-economic, and institutional barriers to decent work. These include extremely low labour force participation (10.6%), high unemployment and NEET rates (especially among young women), limited access to market-relevant skills and TVET, weak employment services, gender gaps in social protection, discriminatory norms, and underrepresentation in social dialogue. These factors reinforce exclusion and limit women's ability to access quality jobs, start businesses, or engage in decision-making.	n/a	- Gender-disaggregated LFS data - NEET rates - ESC usage rates by women - Social protection coverage gaps - Participation of women in employer/worker organizations	- National development priorities maintain focus on gender equality. - Security conditions do not significantly restrict women's mobility.	- Restrictive norms persist → Mitigation: targeted community engagement and behavioural change communication.
Shift 1: strengthened supply-side capabilities	Increase women's employability by enhancing access to skills, training, and employment services. This shift targets structural barriers by providing enabling opportunities for women to enter and remain in the labour market.	- gender-responsive TVET and re-skilling programmes (especially digital, green, and care economy skills). - Improved ESC accessibility and inclusive service design. - Tailored activation pathways for IDPs, returnees, women with disabilities, rural women. - Expansion of counselling, mentoring, and job-placement services.	- of women enrolled in TVET/skills programmes - of women accessing ESC services - Job-placement rate for women - Share of vulnerable women receiving tailored support	- TVET institutions adopt gender-responsive practices. - Sufficient funding for activation programmes.	- Low uptake by women → Mitigation: local outreach, safe transportation, childcare support.
Shift 2: Improved demand-side opportunities	Expand decent job opportunities for women by promoting inclusive private sector growth, MSME development, formalization, and safe workplaces.	- Business development services for women entrepreneurs. - Access to finance, markets, and supply chains for women-led MSMEs. - Support for formalization and improved OSH systems. - Promote gender-responsive workplace policies: childcare, flexible work, anti-harassment protocols, safe transport. - Promote women's entry into green and just-transition sectors.	- increase in jobs for women in targeted sectors - of women-led MSMEs supported - of women transitioning from informal to formal work - Number of companies adopting gender-responsive HR practices	- Private sector open to reform. - Employers engage in ESG and equality initiatives.	- Slow uptake by employers → Mitigation: incentives, demonstration enterprises, capacity building.
Shift 3: Gender-responsive institutions and legal frameworks	Build institutions capable of enforcing equal rights and protecting women at work, including labour inspectorates, social protection bodies, and social partners.	- Training labour inspectors on gender-sensitive enforcement of C100, C111, OSH standards, anti-discrimination. - Strengthen gender mainstreaming in labour law reforms. - Enhance representation of women in unions and employer organizations. - Institutionalize gender-responsive social dialogue platforms. - Improve coverage of women in social protection (social insurance, maternity, childcare, disability).	- of inspectors trained in gender-sensitive enforcement - of labour law reforms integrating gender provisions - Women's representation in bipartite/tripartite bodies - increase in women's SP coverage	- Political willingness to advance institutional reforms. - Social partners' commitment to gender equality.	- Institutional resistance to change → Mitigation: technical support, social partner advocacy, dialogue facilitation.
Outcome	Women gain improved access to decent work, experience reduced discrimination, enjoy stronger protections, and increasingly participate in formal employment, enterprise development, and social dialogue.	- Integration of shifts 1, 2 and 3 through coordinated programming. - Scaling of successful pilot interventions.	- Increase in women LFP - Decrease in women NEET - Increase in share of women in formal jobs - Improvement in gender pay parity indicators	- Effective inter-agency coordination (ILO, UN partners, ministries).	- Fragmented implementation → Mitigation: DWCP Steering Committee oversight.
Impact	More inclusive and equitable labour markets, stronger social justice, higher household resilience, and accelerated progress toward SDGs 4 (skills), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work), and 10 (reduced inequalities).	- National and subnational adoption of successful practices. - Multi-year investment in gender equality frameworks.	- SDG progress indicators - Increased participation of women in institutional decision-making - Reduction in gender gaps across sectors	- Long-term political stability and institutional commitment.	- Macroeconomic shocks → Mitigation: integrate gender equality into crisis-response strategies.



Iraq

Decent Work Country Programme

2026- 2029



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