



BUILDING SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOORS WITH THE ILO

TOGETHER, TO CHANGE MILLIONS OF LIVES IN the Occupied Palestinian Territory

South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Social Protection Study Tour to Oman

History of Social Security Scheme in OPT

Home to 4.5 million Palestinians, the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) is in the process of rolling out its first comprehensive social security system to cover all private sector workers and their families.

Today, only public sector workers benefit from social protection benefits, while most private sector workers are effectively not covered in cases of maternity, workplace injury, or old age. According to official figures, private sector workers make up 66 per cent of the workforce, relative to 22 per cent in the public sector and 12 per cent in Israel and West Bank settlements.

With support from the International Labour Organization (ILO), the framework of the current social security system was developed in 2013 by the tripartite National Social Security Committee in consultation with workers' and employers' organizations, government officials, as well as other stakeholders. In order to ensure its efficacy in combating poverty as well as social exclusion, the system was modelled on an ILO actuarial evaluation which assessed the system's parameters and sustainability. In addition, the system is built on the Civil Servant Pension Scheme (Law of Public Retirement No. 7 of 2005), Labour Law No. 7 of 2000, the ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) and international good practices.

ILO Interventions to set up a comprehensive Social Security System

The OPT lacks a tripartite social security institution which could implement the new social security law and administer and deliver social insurance benefits to insured workers and their family members. Thus, the ILO is providing technical assistance to Palestinian tripartite stakeholders for the setting-up of a well-functioning administration, based on the internationally agreed principles of equality of rights, transparency and disclosure, sustainability, adequacy and good governance.

By supporting the implementation of an administrative structure to make the right to social protection a reality for Palestinians, the ILO is supporting the setting-up of social security operations, a critical step for the building of a sustainable social protection system. Moreover, ILO's support will be based on international

standards and worldwide comparable best practices. It will also promote South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), which adds new forms and actors of development cooperation, and all components of ILO's support will mainstream SSTC, through study tours, peer learning mechanisms and regional sharing of information. ILO's assistance will further contribute to the development of global knowledge, e.g. through a guide on the establishment of the social security administration that can be used in other countries, notably in those supported by ILO's Flagship Programme on Building Social protection Floors for All.

ILO - SSTC: Social Protection Study Tour to Oman

(From 17th to 21st December 2017)

With the assistance of the International Labour Organization (ILO) within the framework of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation, a study tour was arranged in December 2017 for members of the Palestinian Social Security Corporation (PSSC) to the Public Authority for Social Insurance (PASI) in the Sultanate of Oman as part of a strategic plan to develop the necessary knowledge and skills of the Board of Directors and key managers of the PSSC to be able to effectively implement the new Palestinian social security law and its social security schemes. South-South and Triangular Cooperation, as promoted by the ILO, has proven to be an important intervention modality for facilitating regional exchange but also helping to build the skills and knowledge of participants.



This SSTC initiative complements a TC project "Establishing an Independent Social Security Institution for the Administration of

the New Social Security System for Private Sector Workers and their Family Members in Palestine. The project, with the funding support of the Governments of Kuwait and Qatar and ILO funds, aims to assist in the establishment of an independent social security institution for the administration of the new social security system for private sector workers and their family members in the OPT.

The commitment of the Sultanate of Oman towards social change, promoting decent work and empowering impact to improve the labour conditions of the people has led to increasing and cooperation with the ILO in recent years. SSTC is one of the top priorities for the Omani Government and for the ILO as well.

The aim of the Omani Government is to promote horizontal cooperation in order to share South-South information and knowledge, the Omani social protection experience and the benefits that can be gained from training in the field of social security while improving the good practice information learning and dissemination.



Given the excellent standards that PASI follows, it now operates a social insurance system that provides effective and sustainable pensions and lump sum benefits upon retirement, death or disability for insured persons and employment injury benefits for insured workers suffering work injuries or occupational diseases. PASI also made considerable progress in covering more workers and it envisages to extend social security to provide additional benefits (i.e. unemployment insurance benefits). It is one of the best practice examples in the region and is regularly praised by the International Social Security Association for its excellence in social security administration.

In this regard, the ILO and the Sultanate of Oman initiated in November 2016 an initiative aiming to support the OPT in the establishment of its social security administration. The study visit builds up on this initiative and aims to create a synergy between the new Palestinian Social Security Corporation and PASI.

The study tour group was headed by the Director General of PSSC and included three members of the Board of Directors and five key managers of PSSC. Ms. Christine Rouhana, representative

from ILO ROAS/DWT-Beirut, and Mr. John Carter, ILO's international administration expert accompanied the participants during the study tour and attended the sessions of the study tour.

Prior to the study tour, a briefing information note was given to the participants to provide them with some key information on Oman and PASI and its social protection system. (Recommended reading to develop awareness). Participants were appreciative of the briefing notes.



The PSSC participants expressed that the presentations made by PASI officials were effective, professionally delivered and applied to the Palestinian implementation plans. The PSSC managers were especially pleased with the presentations on IT systems, human resource issues and the financial administration of PASI and developed a keen awareness for these complex implementation issues. The participants had many questions on these issues and felt gratified in the discussions on effective implementation issues such as staffing, IT systems hardware and software and standard operating procedures for legal, administration, finance, human resources and staffing and training.



As agreed between the PSSC and PASI management, at the end of the study tour, PASI informed that they are committed to provide technical assistance to PSSC in the planning, designing and implementation of the PSSC administration, and in particular an effective IT system.

While PASI did not see the need for a memorandum of understanding for PASI to provide technical assistance in a number of key areas and experts to travel to Palestine, PASI has requested though, a formal plan of action and the Palestinian delegation is pleased to provide this subsequently.

The former General Manager of PASI made a presentation about Social Insurance and Pensions to participants of the study tour as well as to many other PASI employees. This session tackled many issues related to social security and social security administration so as to make the participants aware of the importance of social security benefits and key issues for implementing social insurance schemes. The main areas focused on were: sustainability and the need for actuarial valuations, the importance of ILO's Convention No. 102, and the need for good governance. Reference was made on a number of occasions to implementation challenges facing social security institutions and how these challenges could be overcome by the PSSC's administration.



The study tour proved to be an important intervention of the ILO's technical assistance. It improved considerably the knowledge and skills of the participants. The PSSC participants gained a better understanding of the complex issues regarding implementing multiple social security schemes at once and that there is a need for a thoughtful and progressive implementation for the multiple schemes prescribed by the new Palestinian social security law.

The ILO will ensure to continue providing technical assistance and support to PSSC, and to arrange further study tours in the near future.

List of Participants

Name	Title
Mr BILAL AHMAD MUSTAFA OMAR	Assistant Engineer - PSSC Board member / Risk committee
Mr NASFAT HAFEZ ABDEL HAFIZ KHAFASH	Institution Manager - PSSC Board member - Representing NGOs
Mr MOHAMED SHAHER ABDEL KARIM FAYEZ SAAD	General Secretary of Trade Unions - PSSC Board member
Mr MOHAMED SHAWKY HASSAN BADRI	PSSC Board member/Risk committee - Representing Workers
Mr OSAMA KAMEL MUSTAFA HARAZ ALLAH	General Director of the Palestinian Social Security Institution
Ms BUTHAINA ABDEL RAHIM AHMED KHALED	Legal Department Manager of the Palestinian Social Security Corporation
Mr SAMIR ZAHER RASHEED EL MASRY	Human Resources Manager of the Palestinian Social Security Corporation
Mr SAMER ABU AISHEH	IT Manager of the Palestinian Social Security Corporation
Mr IMAD (MOHAMMED YASSER) ALI) QAMHIH	Director of the Finance Department of the Palestinian Social Security Corporation

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