

ILO-LUXEMBOURG Project “Building social protection floors for all: support to the extension of social health protection in Asia”

Research on social security requirements within the Government’s licensing system and public bidding process

► Background

Lao PDR 9th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED) for 2021-2025 sets as a priority inclusive economic growth, benefiting all members of society under the overall objective of graduating from least developed country status. Inclusiveness must be an integral part of growth to reduce the inequality gap and further reduce poverty. At the same time, continued economic growth means that the government’s fiscal capacity is expected to improve over the medium to long-term, enabling a gradual creation and expansion of social protection for the most vulnerable groups.

The Government of Lao PDR is committed to gradually aiming for universal coverage in social protection, according to the available resources and the given socio-economic context, and to working towards building a much-needed social protection floor that protects all Lao people from socioeconomic shocks, environmental disasters and vulnerabilities. In April 2020, the Lao government adopted the National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS), to expand on achievements and better address implementation gaps in social protection as well as to prepare for responses to future challenges. The NSPS is directed by its vision, goals and strategic objectives, and is characterized by the different activities prescribed for its implementation. This strategy covers the three pillars of health insurance, social security and social welfare.

In particular, the Government of Lao PDR has demonstrated strong commitment to address the issue of fragmentation of social health protection schemes. In compliance with the Prime Minister Decree 470, and the Law on National Health Insurance, No. 60/NA promulgated on 25 January 2019, the National Health Insurance scheme - integrating the different social health protection schemes – is now implemented nationwide, under the oversight of the National Health Insurance Bureau, MoH. In this new NHI model, the Lao Social Security Office (LSSO) keeps the mandate of registering formal economy workers and their dependants, and to collect contributions accordingly.

The ILO-Luxembourg regional project *Building Social Protection Floors for all: support to the extension of social health protection in Asia*, provides technical and financial support to the Ministry of Health, National Health Insurance Bureau (NHIB), the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Lao Social Security Office (LSSO), Lao Confederation of Trade Union (LFTU) and Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LNCCI) to enhance the design and implementation of the national health insurance system of Lao PDR. In particular, it supports enhancement of administration and governance, formulation of policy reforms informed by evidence, and awareness raising on social health protection, in line with the endorsed annual workplan.

Since 2021, LSSO and ILO have also been working closely together towards the development of necessary legislation, guidelines and management tools to equip the LSSO with a fully operational social security inspection function, with the overall objective to increase enterprises compliance with their obligation to register their employees and pay contributions to the LSSO.

In order to further support LSSO efforts to increase compliance, it is proposed to conduct a research on automatic mechanisms to reinforce enterprises' obligations to register with LSSO through existing government licensing and public bidding process. To this purpose, ILO will conduct a review of existing mechanisms, regulation and rules relating to social security obligations within government licensing and public bid process, and will identify possible avenues to strengthen these obligations. To this purpose, the ILO is hiring a national consultant to undertake the review.

► Objective of the consultancy

This consultancy aims to produce a research to identify whether social security registration proof is necessary for government licensing and public bidding, from selected ministries. The research will explore potential actions to make it a requirement.

► Specific tasks

The consultant will undertake the following activities:

- **Task 1. Map the existing government licensing mechanisms and public bid process within 8-10 selected ministries.**
 - Select Ministries in consultation with the LSSO, from the following priority list: health, education, labour and social welfare, public works and transport, foreign affairs, industry and commerce, agriculture and forestry, natural resources and environment, planning and investment, sciences and technology.
 - List down the license or public bidding opportunities that the selected ministries deliver or offer.
 - For each selected ministry, select two licensing or public bid processes for the purpose of the research. In total between 16 and 20 processes will be analysed.
- **Task 2. Analyse the selected licensing approval mechanism and public bidding process, based on regulation and rules within ministries, in view to identify whether social security registration proof is necessary for government licensing and public bidding.** More specifically, for each process selected, the consultant will:
 - Collect the official rules and regulations that enterprise must provide as part of the application process.
 - For each process, from existing rules and regulations, answer the following questions:
 - Certificate of registration with social security is required as part of the files to be submitted to obtain the said license or participate in the public bid: Yes/No
 - If yes, does it require to specify the number of employees registered and their identity? Yes/No
 - If yes, does the Ministry verify if the number of employees registered is coherent with the information related to the required license for public bid? Yes/No

- **Task 3. If social security registration proof is not included as a requirement, through key informants interviews, identify necessary changes and possible actions to make it a requirement.**
 - What are the changes that would be necessary to make it a requirement?
 - Identify if concerned stakeholders would be favourable to these changes. What could be the possible negative effects of these changes?

► **Outputs and timelines**

The consultant will deliver a report (10-15 pages) covering the scope of work described under “Specific tasks”.

► **Duration and payment schedule**

The work is expected to be conducted in 20 working days, starting from 21 October 2024 to 20 January 2025.

Payment will be made on completion of the assignment to the satisfaction of the ILO and on submission of invoices.

► **Required expertise**

- At least five years of professional experience in Lao PDR in the area of project management, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, ideally with a thematic emphasis on social protection and social security systems implementation and reform, if not, on social issues.
- Proven experience in working effectively with government bodies in charge of policy making, social partners and with development partners
- Experience working with Government officials, including but not limited to ministries of Health, and Labour and Social Welfare in Lao PDR.
- Experience in collecting, organizing and analysing information and preparation of reports
- Excellent command of English and Lao languages
- Excellent report writing skills

► **Attestation for having adequate medical and accident insurance**

The consultant must be aware that the ILO accepts no liability in the event of death, injury, or illness of the consultant. The consultant must attest that he/she is adequately covered by insurance for these risks. In no circumstances shall the consultant be covered by any ILO insurance. It is the consultant’s own responsibility to take out, at their own expense, any personal insurance policies that are considered necessary, including a civil liability insurance policy.

► **Submission of CVs and financial proposal**

Interested candidates must send their applications by 30 Oct 2024, COB, to Marielle Phe Goursat, Programme Manager goursat@ilo.org, and Phatcharaphorn Chatraphorn, Administration and Finance Assistant, chatraphorn@ilo.org with updated CVs and financial proposal. The financial proposal should specify the daily fee.