

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Project name	Supporting the Digital Transformation of Social Protection Systems Globally towards Achieving the Goal of Universal Social Protection 2030
Assignment	Study on Supporting Transitions in the Life Cycle through Data Exchange for the Coordination of Digital Social Protection Information Systems
Contract's duration:	16 June 2025 – 30 September 2025
Work Days	30 Days

Background

The Digital Convergence Initiative (DCI) is a collaborative effort to support achieving the goal of Universal Social Protection by 2030, by furthering the digital transformation of social protection and improving interoperability through advanced digital solutions and systems. Funded by the European Union and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), this initiative is jointly implemented by key partners, including GIZ, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank, the Foundation for the Internationalization of Public Administrations (FIAP) and Expertise France, in close collaboration with the International Social Security Association (ISSA) and other partners.

Social protection plays a vital role in helping individuals and families navigate life's transitions—such as birth, schooling, employment, illness and old age—by providing security and resilience. As these life events present distinct risks and vulnerabilities, it is critical for social protection to deliver timely, adequate, and tailored support throughout the life course in ways that citizens can access the services they need without administrative burdens or duplication of effort. Achieving this requires that life events and transitions are recognized in service delivery models – i.e. services are organized around life events (e.g., birth, moving, retirement) rather than organizational structures - and that data flows seamlessly across institutions and systems.

Co-funded by



Implemented by



Effective coordination between organizations through the use of digital data exchange and data sharing mechanisms enables institutions to provide more integrated and responsive service delivery by identifying the different risks and needs associated to such life events, early on, bundling services and access to them through digital platforms, streamlining or reengineering administrative processes across siloes to improving digital and physical accessibility. This can improve accuracy, efficiency and adaptability of support, reduce fraud and waste, and help design proactive, people-centered interventions. Countries that implement such systems often follow the principles, such as:

- “Tell us only once” – users only need to provide their information once, which—subject to their consent—is then securely shared across systems, eliminating the need to repeatedly submit the same details for each service or agency.
- “No wrong door” – users can access services through any entry point and are seamlessly routed to the appropriate support, without needing to navigate complex institutional structures.
- 360-degree citizen overview at any single counter.
- End-to-end service design – services are designed to support the full user journey, from onboarding and updates to feedback and resolution, rather than focusing solely on isolated interactions.

Under the DCI project and in partnership with the ISSA, the ILO is seeking to engage a technical expert to conduct a study that aims to identify key life events (to be agreed), circumstances and transitions and the associated needs and risks faced by citizens. Secondly, to map the pain points faced by citizens during their journeys to access social security and complementary benefits and services (justice, education, finance, civil registration, health, home affairs, skills or employment programs, etc..). Thirdly, to identify the current systems and services in the selected country cases, examine how they are interconnected and map opportunities for streamlining and reengineering the underlying administrative processes. Finally, suggesting how data exchanges can be improved to allow seamless flow of data and coordinated service delivery across agencies and platforms through improved interoperability.

Objectives

The consultant will lead the development of a publication that maps how coordination between organizations achieved via data exchanges across the life course and

Co-funded by



Implemented by



examines how countries have leveraged data-sharing mechanisms and system interoperability to deliver coordinated, timely and inclusive social protection responses to life cycle transitions.

Drawing on concrete country cases, the study will identify key enablers of effective institutional coordination—such as political will, legal frameworks and shared incentives—while also addressing critical risks, including data privacy concerns and digital exclusion. It will further assess how digital social protection information systems can be designed to support seamless transitions and ensure responsive service delivery throughout an individual's life course.

Outputs and Timeline

The consultant will develop a 20–30-page publication (Arial 12, 1.5 spacing) structured around two core components/outputs under this contract:

OUTPUT 1 – Analytical Mapping and Literature Review, 15 working days, by 31 July 2025

A conceptual and evidence-based overview of how organizations can coordinate to better support individuals through social protection programmes and services across key life cycle transitions. This component should begin with a brief literature review of global approaches, trends and frameworks related to life-course-based social protection and data exchange. Building on this, the consultant should:

1. Identify critical life events (e.g. birth, schooling, employment, job loss, disability, retirement) that trigger interaction with social protection services;
2. Map the risks and needs in those critical events, the typical related benefits and services across different institutions and public authorities typically involved at each stage of the life course;
3. Describe examples of typical user journeys and pain points accessing different services, how siloed, and sometimes manual administrative processes cause administrative burdens and costs, and propose ways to streamline those services, in accordance with the principles of tells us once policy, no wrong door policy, 360 citizen overview and end to end service design.
4. Identify data sources and potential data exchanges that enable timely detection of needs and eligibility across systems;
5. Identify different paradigms that can help achieve coordinated social protection across life cycle transitions. These can include organizational structural arrangements, governance models, data exchange/sharing arrangements;

Co-funded by



Implemented by



6. Analyze, based on documentary evidence and real-world cases, the main challenges and opportunities in data exchange and data sharing to support the development of inclusive, people-centered, and potentially interoperable digital mechanisms for social protection delivery.

This component should lay the foundation for understanding the enabling environment for effective data exchange and its role in supporting seamless, coordinated service delivery throughout an individual's life course.

OUTPUT 2 – Case Studies and Final Publication, 15 working days, by 30 September 2025

The consultant will finalize a 20-30-page publication by incorporating at least four concise country case studies that illustrate effective practices in leveraging data exchange, sharing and/or interoperability to deliver coordinated social protection service packages or benefit bundles in response to key life events.

Each case study should highlight key elements including but not limited to:

- Governance and legal frameworks that enable data sharing and data exchange
- Institutional coordination across ministries and agencies
- Improvements in inter-organizational administrative processes guided by digital-first—but not digital-only—principles, along with the other key principles outlined above
- Alignment of data architecture, standards and semantics
- Strategies to ensure inclusion of marginalized or hard-to-reach populations
- Documented benefits, challenges and key lessons from implementation

The final publication should include an executive summary, policy recommendations and be formatted in line with ILO publication standards. The consultant is expected to present the key findings to the relevant stakeholders for validation and knowledge sharing.

Contract Duration

The duration of the assignment of this contract is from 16 June 2025 to 30 September 2025. The work will be completed and delivered no later than 30 September 2025.

Co-funded by



Implemented by



Qualification and Experience

The consultants should have the following qualifications and experience:

- Advanced university degree in public policy, social protection, information systems, data governance or a related field
- Minimum 8 years of professional experience in digital transformation, social protection systems and public service design
- Strong track record in developing research products, policy briefs or publications related to interoperability and/or life cycle approaches in social protection
- Demonstrated understanding of data exchange, governance and legal frameworks in digital systems
- Excellent analytical, research, writing and communication skills in English

Application Procedure

Interested candidates are invited to submit the following documents to xiaol@ilo.org by **30 May 2025**, with the subject line: "Application: Study on Supporting Transitions in the Life Cycle through Data Exchange for Digital Social Protection Information Systems":

- **Detailed CV and Portfolio:** Highlight relevant experience, past projects and achievements that demonstrate your qualifications and expertise.
- **Technical Proposal:** Outline the understanding of the assignment objectives and proposed approach.
- **Financial Proposal:** Provide proposed fee structure (in USD) for completing the assignment.

Co-funded by



Implemented by

