

TERMS OF REFERENCE

A study on the garment sector employees' demand for childcare services

Background

The garment, footwear and travel goods sectors represent 75% of Cambodia's export revenues and 16% of the national economy. These sectors employ about 800,000 workers, or ca. 10% of the employed population. The vast majority of these workers are wage earners (employees) and are employed in establishments with 50 or more employees. Despite the contribution of the industry to the economy, factory workers, and especially women in the sector, face numerous rights issues. Low pays, long working hours, dangerous work environments, and the inability to benefit from working rights are exacerbated by the gender dimension, so that women face disproportionate discrimination, unequal opportunities, and lack of access to assets and benefits.

The majority of these factories' employees are women, typically joining the factory at 18 years of age. On average, these workers become parents for the first time as 24 to 25 years old. The Labour Law of Cambodia stipulates that women employee are entitled to 90 days of maternity leave on half pay and benefits. Further, for factories with more than 100 employees the law establishes childcare support as the employers' responsibility. Said support is provided either by establishing onsite or near-site childcare facilities or providing childcare allowances to those workers who opt not to place children in the factories' facilities. Factories may also select to exclusively provide allowances instead of establishing in-house or outsourced childcare services, but the value of the allowance is not defined by the Law. In addition, workplaces with more than 100 employees need to set up and maintain a nursing room.

Despite a regulatory framework aiming at creating a conducive environment for working mothers to maintain their employment, several factors hamper the effective and adequate provision of benefits and services in the industry. These factors lead to low workers' retention, high turnovers, and increased absenteeism. The main barriers are to be found in the dimensions of quality, affordability, accessibility, and availability, and include:

- Discriminatory contractual arrangements and hiring procedures,
- Limited availability of centres accepting children from 3 to 18 months of age,
- Physical barriers to access childcare centres,
- Dangers in commuting with children,
- Inconvenient opening hours,
- Poor quality of facilities and low-skilled staff,
- High cost of childcare centres, and
- Limited information on services provided

Objective

The IFC and ILO's joint programme Better Factories Cambodia and the ILO Country Office for Thailand, Cambodia, and Lao PDR aim at understanding the demand for childcare services in the garment, footwear and travel goods industries in Cambodia, and especially from workers' (and former workers') own perspectives and needs, based on their situations. The knowledge acquired with this study will contribute to strengthen the existing body of evidence on the topic, and to formulate concrete policy options to address the existing challenges. Ultimately, the outcome of the project is to improve working conditions and boost competitiveness of the garment industry, potentially to increase retention of workers with children, as well as to promote and maintain the formalization process of employment in Cambodia.

This work would be carried out between 1 October and 31 December 2022.

Scope of work and deliverables

1. **Undertake a background analysis and develop a methodology for the study.** The researchers will submit a methodology and a working plan that describe the approach to the study, relevant stakeholders, the techniques to be used, the expected timeline and limitations.



2. **Develop research questions for workers of the industry.** The researchers will elaborate a set of guiding questions investigating the needs and preferences for childcare. The development is expected to be informed by consultations with the industry stakeholders, an analysis of the existing publications on the topic in Cambodia, and approved by the supervising ILO team (Social Protection and Better Factories Cambodia programmes).
3. **Conduct field research among target groups.** The researchers will identify the relevant target groups, and reach out and conduct the study among them. The researchers are expected to elaborate a proposal concerning the target groups rational and size.
4. **Compile, analyse, and report the study results.** The researchers are expected to compile the gathered data and perform analytical work on the findings. The final product will be a report summarizing findings and presenting policy options and recommendations stemming from the study.

Tasks and Deliverables

1. Inception report outlining the methodology and workplan, including a stakeholder analysis and target groups of the study
2. A set of guiding questions for conducting the field research (e.g., a questionnaire script)
3. Draft report compiling and analysing the findings, including practical policy recommendations
4. Final report
5. Presentation

TIMELINE

ACTIVITY	ENDLINE
Deliverable 1: Undertake a background analysis and develop a methodology for the study.	10 Jan 2023
Deliverable 2: Develop research questions for workers of the industry	25 Jan 2023
Deliverable 3: Conduct field research among target groups	28 Feb 2023
Deliverable 4: Compile, analyse, and report the study results	07 Apr 2023

Qualification and Selection Criteria

Applications are accepted for a research team or firm who shall have the following demonstrated qualifications:

- Proven experience in planning and conducting social research in Cambodia
- Proven experience working on gender-related issues
- Proven ability to conduct qualitative studies and analyses
- Ability to mobilize and train field researchers
- Knowledge of the global and Cambodia's garment industry
- Fluency in English and Khmer
- Experience working with the UN and in particular the ILO is an advantage

The ILO will select the proposal(s) that provides value for money. The proposal(s) meeting the qualification requirements and submitting the necessary information will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Demonstrated understanding of the requirement
- Demonstrated awareness and explicit inclusion of gender analysis in the research plan
- Soundness and quality of the proposed approach and plan
- Research experiences in the relevant fields
- Creative approach is used in the proposal
- Realistic timeframe
- Readiness to undertake the assignment
- Ability to organize the proposed work with the minimum support from the ILO



Technical and financial proposals

Applicants must submit a technical proposal and a financial proposal separately.

The technical proposal includes the following elements:

- A preliminary research protocol demonstrating the understanding of:
 - the main research question,
 - potential research sub-questions,
 - stakeholders and approach to engagement,
 - methodology for data collection, and
 - workplan.
- Declaration of research capacity:
 - The research firm portfolio in the past 5 years, or the CVs of the team members in the case of a research team
 - Role and responsibility of each staff member involved
 - A copy of one selected work in English

A detailed financial proposal shall be prepared.

Duration

The work under this assignment will start **from 5 January 2023 until 25 April 2023**.

Submission of Proposal

Interested applicants should send their technical proposal including CVs of team members and previous similar works to PN2-SOCPRO@ilo.org. The financial proposal shall be submitted separately to kanhchana@ilo.org. Both technical and financial proposals are to be submitted by **14th December 2022 at 5pm, local time in Phnom Penh, Cambodia**. Late submissions will not be considered

Confidentiality Statement

All data and information received for the purpose of this assignment are to be treated confidentially and are only to be used in connection with the execution of these Terms of Reference. All intellectual property rights arising from the execution of these Terms of Reference are assigned to IFC and ILO. The contents of written materials obtained and used in this assignment may not be disclosed to any third parties without the express advance written authorization of the IFC and ILO.