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INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY ASSOCIATION

Programme of activities 2017–2019

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The International Social Security Association (ISSA) is the world's leading international organization for social security institutions, government departments and agencies. The ISSA promotes excellence in social security administration through professional guidelines, expert knowledge, services and support to enable its members to develop dynamic social security systems and policy throughout the world.

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Chapter 1: The ISSA – the global community of social security administrations committed to excellence

The International Social Security Association

Access to social security is a human right and social security is essential for individuals, societies and economic advancement. Excellence in social security administration is a condition for the successful implementation of the right to social security. Social security coverage and protection cannot be reached without well-governed, performing and trusted social security administrations.

The International Social Security Association (ISSA) is the global organization bringing together social security institutions and government departments. It was founded in 1927 with the historic mandate “to co-operate in the promotion and development of social security, primarily through its technical and administrative improvement, in order to advance the social and economic conditions of the population on the basis of social justice” (*Article 2* of the ISSA Constitution).

Pursuing its mandate, the ISSA is the recognized authoritative body to issue professional standards in social security administration and provides its member institutions with knowledge, services and access to networks that effectively support them in tackling and overcoming priority challenges. The ISSA promotes social security and the important role of social security administration at the international level, and makes a key contribution to the development of well-governed social security systems for all.

Co-operating in overcoming priority challenges for social security administrations

Important progress in social security development can be observed in recent years in many regions of the world and social security is now recognized globally as a key investment. However, a large part of the world population is still not covered by social security protection and the sustainability of existing schemes remains a challenge.

Demographic changes, labour market developments, increasing migration, technological innovations, changing family structures, evolving health risk factors and increasing client expectations create major challenges for existing social security schemes. These challenges have been compounded by continued economic uncertainties.

More than ever, strengthened political commitment and excellence in social security administration are indispensable conditions for extending, sustaining and developing social security schemes.

In this context, social security institutions are required to continuously improve and innovate to implement reforms, ensure protection, good governance and high service levels as well as support prevention, early intervention, health and employability. Faced with administrative, organizational and technological challenges as well as resource constraints, working towards excellence requires continuous learning and improvement.

In the absence of comparable institutions at the national level, looking abroad is a crucial means for social security institutions to identify innovations, learn about good practices and exchange experiences. Social security institutions have therefore formed the ISSA as their global community that facilitates effective co-operation in meeting common challenges towards excellence.

The ISSA's strategic framework

The Association is guided by the strategic vision to:

*“Promote **dynamic social security** through supporting **excellence in social security administration**”*

Dynamic social security refers to social security systems that are accessible to all, sustainable, provide adequate benefits, invest in prevention and early intervention and make a positive contribution to social and economic development.

ISSA member institutions are committed to work towards excellence in social security administration and are supported by the ISSA through appropriate knowledge and services.

The expected outcome of the Association is therefore to achieve:

*“**Excellence in social security administration** as a basis for social security systems that are sustainable, provide adequate benefits, invest in prevention and early intervention and make a positive contribution to social and economic development.”*

The ISSA's strategic objectives

The ISSA is a knowledge-based service organization that aims to provide each of its member institutions with relevant and quality products and services that effectively support their commitment to excellence in social security administration. The ISSA therefore implements a triennial programme of activities that aims to pursue the following **four strategic objectives**:

1. *Provide relevant knowledge to member institutions, in particular through the establishment of professional standards in social security administration, and practical services that support the efficient application of this knowledge;*
2. *Offer relevant networks and international platforms for members to exchange;*
3. *Promote dynamic social security at the international level;*
4. *Ensure high levels of service to each member institution, efficient programme delivery and good governance of the Association.*

In pursuing the ISSA strategic objectives and in delivering quality services to ISSA member institutions, the ISSA General Secretariat is committed to the values of empathy, integrity, open-to-change and service quality. To ensure accountability, transparency and good governance, the ISSA General Secretariat ensures full compliance with the ISSA Constitution, the Good Governance Charter, the Financial Regulations and standards and is committed to continue its existing ISO 9001 quality standards certification.

The ISSA provides services to social security administrations irrespective of the type of benefit or branch covered, and offers both general and specific services for contributory and non-contributory, pensions, health care, unemployment, family allowances, work injury, prevention and related schemes.

The ISSA works in partnership with other international organizations active in the field of social security. The Association is in particular committed to implementing the Memorandum of Understanding with the International Labour Organization (ILO) signed in March 2012 and to seeking closer collaboration in further areas such as prevention and employment to the benefit of both ISSA members and ILO constituents. The ISSA supports the objectives of the ILO and is committed to promoting the body of ILO legal instruments, in particular in the field of social security.

Chapter 2: ISSA priority and development objectives for 2017-2019

Based on the definition of the long-term vision of dynamic social security in 2007, a comprehensive modernization of ISSA's products and services in line with the expressed needs of member institutions as well as measures to strengthen accountability and transparency in the Association were implemented during the **triennium 2008-2010**.

The **triennium 2011-2013** then provided the stage for a stronger focus on the ISSA's unique niche at the international level and for laying the basis for a historic strategic development of ISSA's role and value added for member institutions.

This development transforms the ISSA from a provider of general knowledge and services to a provider of practical knowledge and impact-oriented tailored services of direct relevance to the mandates of member institutions. The objective of this development is to *significantly increase the value of the ISSA for all members, to sustain the Association in a challenging environment, and strengthen the ISSA's contribution to the extension and improvement of social security protection for populations around the world*. Two key measures have reflected this transformation of the ISSA.

First, the ISSA embraced a new role as the authoritative international body defining professional standards (**ISSA Guidelines**) in social security administration. This new role received strong support by member institutions and is recognized at the international level by the ILO in the framework of the ISSA-ILO Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2012. Eight sets of ISSA Guidelines, developed under the auspices of the ISSA Technical Commissions and each bringing together practical knowledge of international best practice in a priority area of administration, were launched at the World Social Security Forum 2013.

At the same time, the **ISSA Centre for Excellence** was launched as a second major initiative. Designed to effectively support member institutions in working towards administrative improvements, the Centre is a significant re-positioning of the ISSA's as a closer and more relevant partner of member institutions in their core business areas. The phased introduction of the new services offered by the ISSA Centre for Excellence exclusively to ISSA members, including technical advice and support, the Academy learning and capacity building, benchmarking and recognition, constituted the main priority during the **triennium 2014-2016**.

A member consultation held end 2014 and the global member survey 2015 confirmed the overwhelming support of member institutions to the new ISSA strategic direction. The member survey also pointed to the concrete impact that the new ISSA tools have already had at member level, and thereby to the improvement potential in terms of performance, service quality and governance that ISSA membership can bring to social security institutions. However, member feedback also indicated some areas of potential improvement and adjustment to the Centre for Excellence service package, which, in addition to various evaluations, will provide important guidance for refining and consolidating services during the coming triennium.

Experience has also shown that in order to ensure the full potential of the new strategic direction, ISSA Guidelines and the practical services of the Centre for Excellence must be complemented by a third important development. The traditional ISSA approach to informing and relating to ISSA members needs to evolve to ensure that they can make full use of the new services offered to them. More regular and individual exchanges are necessary to enable the ISSA to offer the right service to the right members at the right time.

As a third major measure complementing the ISSA Guidelines and the Centre for Excellence services, the ISSA must therefore strengthen its approaches to **Member Engagement** that, by ensuring high levels of member knowledge of ISSA products and by enabling the provision of tailored services, position the ISSA as a valuable partner of each member institution.

In addition, the ISSA Guidelines, the ISSA Centre for Excellence and the capacity to provide tailored services enable the ISSA to be a more recognized partner at the international level, and facilitate the strategic objective to promote social security at the international level.

Against this background, the ISSA strategic development during the triennium 2017-2019 will focus on the following three priority areas:

1. *Developing ISSA capacities to engage, and provide tailored services to, member institutions;*
2. *Refining and consolidating the services offered by the ISSA Centre for Excellence;*
3. *Strengthen the promotion of sustainable extension of social security coverage and proactive and preventive social security measures.*

Through these developments, the ISSA will be able to fully implement its new role as a knowledge-based service organization of high relevance and value for each member organization, and thereby strengthen its contribution to effective social security protection. In addition, the ISSA will also be in a better position to strengthen its efforts to extend its membership base, which will be an important aim for the triennium 2017-2019.

1. Developing ISSA capacities to engage, and provide tailored services to, member institutions

The ISSA Guidelines and the Centre for Excellence enable the ISSA to be a valued partner for each member institution in its efforts to meet core business challenges and work towards administrative improvements. To implement this role of the ISSA, and thereby ensure that members can fully benefit from the knowledge and services provided by the ISSA, the mere offer of knowledge and services is not sufficient.

The ISSA must in addition develop its capacities and resources to communicate and engage regularly and appropriately with each member institution. A more individual approach to relations with member institutions is required to obtain knowledge about, and be responsive to, their current activities, needs and priorities. In reaching out to members, the objective of the ISSA must be to serve as a valuable asset for staff across member institutions.

Defining a new member engagement and relations strategy as well as developing the appropriate front-office and back-office tools and approaches to implement this strategy will therefore be a key priority for the ISSA during the triennium 2017-2019.

The resulting increase in familiarity with the experiences, needs and priorities of individual member institutions will not only make the ISSA service offer more efficient and effective, but also widen its capacity to facilitate access to relevant practices and innovations as well as networking and exchange between member institutions.

2. Refining and consolidating the knowledge and services offered by the ISSA Centre for Excellence

The following services of the Centre for Excellence were designed and implemented progressively during the triennium 2014-2016:

- ISSA Technical Advice and Support;
- ISSA Academy workshops;
- ISSA Academy diploma learning programme;
- ISSA Benchmarking;
- ISSA Recognition.

These new services constitute a significant re-definition of the ISSA's role towards a more relevant and closer partner of member institutions in their core business areas and are based on the unique knowledge offered by the Centre. In view of the novelty and importance of this programme, the ISSA will refine and consolidate the knowledge and services offered by the ISSA Centre for Excellence in four ways.

First, and in response to the challenges and needs expressed in the member survey 2015, the ISSA will add a dynamic development dimension to ISSA knowledge and the Centre for Excellence. In a rapidly evolving policy, demographic, social, technological and labour market context, social security administrations must anticipate and innovate to ensure performance and deliver high quality services. While the ISSA Guidelines provide practical knowledge on standards in a specific area, they must be complemented by opportunities to learn and exchange about innovation. To effectively support member institutions in anticipating, enabling and managing change and innovation, the ISSA will bundle its various research and study activities in a new Research and Innovation function as part of the Centre. The outputs of Research and Innovation will also be instrumental in ensuring that the regular Guidelines review process is effective by adding the latest developments in a specific field.

Second, the ISSA has during 2014-2016 paid high attention to consulting members and to evaluating the various activities. While reflecting a high appreciation by member institutions, member feedback and results of evaluations have also shown the potential to further improve certain aspects and procedures of the existing services.

Third, some services such as ISSA Benchmarking or ISSA Recognition that are being developed during the triennium 2014-2016 for a number of Guidelines will be further extended.

Finally, the member survey 2015 indicated specific member needs, preferences and priorities that in some cases require adapting and extending the services provided. This is particularly the case with regard to enhanced opportunities for member to member exchange, which requires the ISSA to develop its capacity to efficiently and rapidly facilitate access by members to the appropriate experience and expertise of other member institutions.

3. Strengthen the promotion of sustainable extension of social security coverage and proactive and preventive social security measures

Promoting social security including coverage extension, the positive impact of social security and proactive and preventive social security measures at both international and national levels are key roles of the Association.

The practical knowledge included in the ISSA Guidelines and the support and capacity building services offered by the Centre for Excellence provide important opportunities for the ISSA to strengthen its impact in this regard. In particular, by complementing its traditional role of highlighting the positive role of social security and social security administration through concrete knowledge and support tools actually facilitating the extension of coverage, work towards pro-active and preventive approaches or improved governance, the ISSA significantly increases its recognition and standing at the international level.

Better leveraging this potential to become a more relevant partner both in international fora and for the national projects carried out by international and domestic actors will therefore be one of the priorities during the triennium. This development will engender a range of valuable benefits for member institutions as it contributes to strengthened political commitment to social security, increased recognition of the role of social security administrations as well as to appropriate investments in their capacities, and also potentially creates opportunities for member institutions to access additional resources and expertise through the ISSA.

Chapter 3: The proposals for the programme of activities for 2017-2019

Each proposed programme activity is presented in line with the results-based programming and budgeting methodology adopted by the ISSA. This presentation includes:

- the title of the activity;
- a short description of the content of the activity;
- the expected outputs of the activity.

The Secretary General provides a report on the implementation of the planned programme at each meeting of the ISSA Bureau and will also submit a medium-term report on programme implementation to the ISSA Bureau during 2018.

In order to measure the performance of the ISSA as an organization, all member institutions will be surveyed in 2018 to rate the quality and impact/potential impact of the ISSA's products and services in assisting them to work towards excellence in social security administration.

1. Centre for Excellence

Launched at the World Social Security Forum 2013, the ISSA Centre for Excellence provides member institutions with access to practical knowledge and services that effectively assist them in meeting key challenges in working towards excellence.

The priority topical areas of the ISSA Centre for Excellence correspond to the topics covered by the ISSA Guidelines as outlined in Box 1. The main activities that form part of the Centre for Excellence are the following (described in detail below):

- *ISSA Guidelines and Guidelines knowledge-base* that implement the ISSA's role as authoritative body to issue professional standards for social security administration, and reflect and illustrate international best practice in a technical area;
- *ISSA Centre for Excellence services* that provide support, exchange, learning and capacity-building activities as well as benchmarking and recognition opportunities in the technical areas covered by the ISSA Guidelines;
- *ISSA Research and Innovation* that ensures the dynamic dimension of the Centre for Excellence and supports member institutions to better anticipate, enable and manage change and innovation in an evolving policy, demographic, social, technological and labour market context;
- *Member engagement and promotion* that ensures the capacity of the ISSA to engage regularly and appropriately with each member institution with a view to ensuring responsiveness to their needs and priorities as well as effective and efficient service provision.

Box 1: *ISSA Guidelines and topical areas for the service offer of the ISSA Centre for Excellence*

- Good Governance
- Administrative solutions for extending coverage
- Service Quality
- Communication by Social Security Administrations
- Contribution Collection and Compliance
- Information and Communication Technology
- Actuarial Work for Social Security
- Investment of Social Security Funds
- Promoting Sustainable Employment
- Return-to-Work and Re-integration
- Workplace Health Promotion
- Prevention of Occupational Risks

1.1 Guidelines and Guidelines knowledge base

1.1.1 ISSA Guidelines and Self-Assessment Tools

The ISSA Guidelines are internationally recognized professional standards in social security administration and offer members access to concise and practical knowledge of international best practice in a specific topical area.

By the end of the triennium 2014-2016, the ISSA has produced 12 Guidelines in areas rated as priorities by members and listed in Box 1. Available exclusively to member institutions in seven languages, each Guideline is accompanied by a self-assessment tool allowing them to compare their situation with the Guidelines standards. ISSA Guidelines are produced and reviewed under the technical authority of the ISSA Technical Commissions according to a standard procedure adopted by the ISSA Bureau. The adherence to the procedure is controlled by the Guidelines Committee of the ISSA Bureau.

This activity provides the resources for the development of new Guidelines, the review and extension of existing Guidelines as well as the corresponding development and review of self-assessment tools. Importantly, the first review of Guidelines will, in line with the standard procedure, be carried out for the eight Guidelines prepared during the 2011-2013 triennium. The activity is implemented by the ISSA General Secretariat in close collaboration with ISSA Technical Commissions and also supports the Guidelines Committee of the ISSA Bureau in the implementation of its mandate.

Expected outputs:

1. Review and update of eight Guidelines produced during the triennium 2011-2013 according to a standard procedure to be developed in collaboration with the Bureau Committee on Guidelines;
2. Depending on the resource requirements for the expected output number one above, up to three new Guidelines and related self-assessment tools. In line with the recommendation of the ISSA Bureau, new Guidelines would in priority order focus on

- (1) integrity: preventing and combatting fraud and error; (2) reduction of long-term inactivity on grounds of ill-health; and (3) administration of conditional cash benefits and services;
3. Three reports to the Bureau Committee on Guidelines.

1.1.2 ISSA Guidelines knowledge base

This activity provides ISSA members with relevant complementary knowledge around the ISSA Guidelines, and in particular with case studies, good practices, and practical illustrations.

This activity ensures the development of the necessary knowledge base for the existing ISSA Guidelines, consisting mainly of Guidelines references and illustrations of good practice as well as of knowledge tools that are the basis for Guidelines-related services.

The Guidelines follow a standard structure consisting of the Guidelines principle as well as mechanisms and structures that institutions can consider to implement this principle. Complementing the Guidelines by case studies, concrete experiences and good practices that illustrate how one or several Guidelines principles have been realized by social security administrations in practice is necessary and relevant knowledge of high value.

This activity therefore structures, collects and regularly updates this knowledge complementing the ISSA Guidelines based on several internal and external sources including the ISSA Technical Commissions and the ISSA Good Practice Database. It will organize the Good Practice Award Competitions, which are now aligned to the topics of the ISSA Guidelines, on the occasion of each Regional Social Security Forum, and seek more on-going Good Practice entries.

This activity also ensures the development of the appropriate knowledge tools for the services provided through the Centre for Excellence and that are based on the content of the ISSA Guidelines. This includes in particular the standard course content for Guidelines training programmes, indicator development for ISSA benchmarking and assessment guides for ISSA recognition.

Expected outputs:

1. Relevant and regularly updated references, good practices and illustrations for each set of ISSA Guidelines and improved access to Guidelines-related knowledge;
2. ISSA Database of Good Practices in Social Security Administration structured in line with the topics of the ISSA Guidelines;
3. Organization of ISSA Good Practice Award Competitions on the occasion of each Regional Social Security Forum;
4. Development of the knowledge tools for the Centre for Excellence services, including the standard course content for the training programme of the ISSA Academy, performance indicators for ISSA benchmarking and assessment criteria for the ISSA recognition programme.

1.2 Centre for Excellence services

1.2.1 ISSA Technical Advice and Support

This service offers member institutions access to technical advice and support in their work towards administrative improvements, including through the ISSA General Secretariat, member-to-member knowledge and support and external expertise.

Responding to requests for technical advice and support from member institutions is an important service function of the ISSA and is governed by a Service Charter outlining the scope and limits of the services provided. One important objective will be to better develop the ISSA's capacity to efficiently facilitate access to relevant experiences and innovations of other member institutions as well as to external expertise. An improved Guidelines knowledge base (see above) will considerably facilitate this objective. In addition, this activity will focus on better enabling twinning initiatives between members for institutions that require more substantial support. It is implemented by the ISSA General Secretariat in collaboration with Technical Commissions and external experts.

Expected output:

1. Technical advice and support to ISSA member institutions in the areas covered by the ISSA Guidelines, including responses to technical information requests, access to experiences of other member institutions and facilitation of member-to-member support and twinings.

1.2.2 ISSA Academy

The ISSA Academy offers members access to concrete problem-solving, learning and exchange platforms (ISSA workshops) as well as capacity-building and human resource development opportunities both virtually (ISSA web portal) and physically (ISSA training courses).

ISSA Academy workshops, which are offered to between 12 and 18 participants and focus on one topical area covered by an ISSA Guideline, allow for addressing specific challenges and needs of each member institution represented and are led by ISSA accredited experts. The programme of ISSA workshops is developed based on the topical interests and priorities expressed by member institutions in the member survey 2015. The evaluations of the first workshops during the triennium 2014-2016 will be used to refine and adapt the methodology to optimally meet member needs.

The ISSA Academy training programme aims to support member institutions in enhancing staff skills, developing human resources and building future management capacities through access to quality training on international professional standards in social security administration. Delivered through the ISSA Training Consortium, a select group of specialized training institutions in different regions accredited by the ISSA, training courses on ISSA Guidelines feature a standardized content developed by the ISSA and cater to the geographic and language diversity of ISSA members. Upon request, training courses can also be organized for individual member institutions or several member institutions in one or a group of countries. The programme of training courses is developed by the members of the ISSA Training Consortium and participation in a course is on a cost recovery basis.

In addition, the ISSA Academy will offer an increasingly sophisticated learning environment for each Guideline on the ISSA web portal. This will include relevant background material and allow the staff of member institutions to effectively learn about international professional standards without the need to travel.

The ISSA Academy is implemented by the ISSA General Secretariat in collaboration with external experts and professional training institutions.

Expected outputs:

1. A programme of ISSA Academy workshops in various regions and languages according to the expressed needs and priorities of member institutions;
2. A programme of ISSA Academy training courses on ISSA Guidelines offered through an ISSA training consortium, and the organization of customized courses upon request;
3. An e-learning environment for each set of ISSA Guidelines including appropriate information and learning tools as part of the ISSA web portal.

1.2.3 ISSA benchmarking

The ISSA benchmarking programme offers member institutions a unique opportunity to assess their levels of administrative performance in comparison with selected peers, and identify potential areas for improvement.

In view of the development of the ISSA Guidelines and the Centre for Excellence, the branch-specific approach pursued during the first benchmarking exercise implemented in 2012 was during the 2014-2016 triennium replaced by a focus on key performance indicators related to the ISSA Guidelines. Members will therefore be able to access the full range of knowledge and services of the ISSA Centre for Excellence should they find their performance on certain indicators insufficient and would like to embark on improvement initiatives. The new approach developed in 2015 is being tested in 2016.

Consolidating this service that has been given a high priority by member institutions but is also dependant on the active participation of many members. The ISSA will develop benchmarking for those Guidelines that are found to be of highest relevance to ISSA members and are therefore expected to attract sufficient participation. This includes the development of key performance indicators, the implementation of benchmarking surveys and the production of benchmarking reports. Building on the ISSA Reserve Fund Monitor Survey, a specific benchmarking exercise will be carried out in the area of investment of social security funds in collaboration with an external consultant.

Expected outputs:

1. Benchmarking surveys to collect benchmarking data from member institutions;
2. Benchmarking reports for participating member institutions.

1.2.4 ISSA recognition

The ISSA recognition programme offers member institutions the opportunity to obtain ISSA recognition of their compliance with one or more sets of ISSA Guidelines.

ISSA Recognition is a voluntary programme that aims to encourage administrative improvements as well as to provide a service that supports the efforts of social security institutions to strengthen their legitimacy vis-à-vis their stakeholders, both internally and

externally. The recognition process is based on standardized assessment criteria and the assessment is carried out by independent assessors. While the ISSA budget covers all programme development and implementation costs, member institutions requesting recognition are charged a fee that covers the costs of the external assessment process.

Piloted during the triennium 2014-2016, the ISSA recognition programme will be implemented for more Guidelines during the triennium 2017-2019. This includes the production of assessment criteria and guides for member institutions as well as the identification and training of assessors in various languages. In addition, management of the recognition process in collaboration with participating member institutions and assessors is covered by this activity, which is implemented by the ISSA General Secretariat in collaboration with external experts.

Expected outputs:

1. An ISSA recognition scheme available to member institutions for each Guideline covered by the recognition programme;
2. An assessment report for each member institution participating in the ISSA recognition programme.

1.3 Research & innovation

Research and innovation offers members opportunities to identify, and exchange on, innovative approaches to support them in better anticipating, enabling and managing change in an evolving context. It will also provide forward looking input for the ISSA Centre for Excellence products and services.

This activity bundles the ISSA analytical capacities and ensures high quality knowledge and exchange opportunities on priority policy and administrative innovations. It informs the development of the ISSA Guidelines programme by pointing to the most relevant areas for new Guidelines and by informing of developments that require the review and updating of existing Guidelines. It is implemented in close collaboration with the ISSA Technical Commissions.

Activities carried out by ISSA research and innovation focus on the monitoring of key policy, demographic, social, technological and administrative developments combined with the analysis of their impact on social security administrations. It identifies enabling factors for innovation by social security administrations as well as emerging responses to evolving priority trends and challenges, and thereby supports member institutions in anticipating and managing innovation and change effectively and efficiently.

Activities will also include preparatory studies for potential Guidelines topics during the triennium 2020-2022 as well as the development of proposals for the review and updating of existing Guidelines.

Research and innovation will also provide for the production of the *International Social Security Review (ISSR)*, which is the principal international quarterly peer-reviewed journal in the field of social security and social security administration. An editorial board provides quality assurance and guides the development of this important ISSA publication that is produced under contract with a world renowned publishing house. Efforts to broaden the topical coverage of the ISSR towards research on social security management and administration will be made.

Expected outputs:

1. Exchange opportunities and knowledge outputs for senior managers and experts of member institutions to support them in anticipating, enabling and managing change and innovation;
2. Four reports and web content on innovations in social security policy and administration published on the occasion of the ISSA Regional Social Security Forums;
3. One report and web content on innovations in social security policy and administration published on the occasion of the ISSA World Social Security Forum;
4. Up to nine regular issues of the *International Social Security Review* and three special issues focussing on priority challenges in social security administration;
5. Technical contributions to the ISSA international professional conferences and to the World Social Security Forum, in collaboration with ISSA Technical Commissions;
6. Preparatory studies on potential priority topics for ISSA Guidelines during the triennium 2020-2022 and proposals for the review and updating of existing Guidelines.

1.4 Member engagement

Centre for Excellence member engagement ensures that member institutions can fully benefit from the Centre for Excellence based on responsive service provision to each member institution by the ISSA General Secretariat.

This activity develops and ensures the capacity of the ISSA to engage with each member institution with a view to ensuring responsiveness to member needs and priorities as well as effective and efficient service provision. The objective is to support member institutions through tailored service offers that facilitate their optimal use of the range of ISSA Centre for Excellence knowledge and services. Increased knowledge about members' key experiences, measures and innovations will also contribute to the ISSA's capacity to facilitate member-to-member exchanges and support.

The necessary definition of a new member engagement and promotion strategy will rely both on developing the appropriate back-office tools that allow for efficient customer relations and knowledge management, and on allocating the necessary staff time to engage with each member institution. This activity is implemented by the ISSA General Secretariat in collaboration with the ISSA regional structures.

Expected outputs:

1. Implementation of a member engagement strategy including the necessary tools and capacities to ensure regular and appropriate communication with each member institution;
2. An adapted customer relationship and knowledge management back-office system;
3. An account management system ensuring sustained contacts with each member institution to facilitate engagement with the Centre for Excellence and the other ISSA products and services.

2. ISSA Country profiles

ISSA country profiles offer members access to unique information on social security systems in 177 countries, including detailed descriptions of old-age, survivors and invalidity pension, health care and maternity, unemployment insurance, work accident insurance and family allowances systems.

ISSA country profiles constitute a unique data source for members to compare their own scheme in regional and global contexts, to facilitate their international activities and as a basis for the negotiation, preparation and implementation of bilateral and multi-lateral social security agreements. While alternative data sources exist for European countries, the information that is produced in co-operation with the United States Social Security Administration (SSA) is unique for the remainder of the world and complemented by key country indicators and summary tables. The data is presented in a searchable and easily accessible manner on the ISSA web portal.

In addition to the continued efforts to extend the number of countries covered as well as to integrate new types of schemes, two key development objectives for the country profiles will be pursued. The first development relates to the collection of data on bilateral agreements, which responds to the increasing priority and workload of members related to cross-country workers and payments. Secondly, the ISSA will begin collecting key institutional data on social security administrations, including the number of staff, offices, and administrative system highlights. Responding to these member priorities, the ISSA will phase out its work on the bibliographic and reforms databases.

Expected outputs:

1. Regularly updated social security country profiles accessible and fully searchable on the ISSA web portal;
2. Collection and publication of information on bilateral agreements per country as well as on key institutional data of social security institutions.

3. ISSA International Conferences and Platforms

3.1 ISSA World Social Security Forum

The ISSA World Social Security Forum offers ISSA members access to the most important global gathering of CEOs and senior social security administrators, social security ministers and policy-makers as well as representatives of international organizations.

The ISSA World Social Security Forum is the most important event in the cycle of ISSA activities and consists of five days of highly relevant presentations and discussions on the key priority global trends and issues in social security policy and administration. Offering unique senior level network opportunities, plenary and interactive sessions and as well as meetings of the ISSA General Assembly and the ISSA Council, the World Social Security Forum 2019 will be a special event for all member institutions.

The World Social Security Forum is organized by General Secretariat in collaboration with the host organization, and the ISSA Technical Commissions make a key input to the agenda and the technical discussions. Programme highlights include a session on developments and trends, technical and interactive sessions on excellence in social security administration and innovation, as well as on priority social security challenges, and the World Social Security Summit.

Expected output:

1. World Social Security Forum to take place in the second half of 2019.

3.2 ISSA Regional Social Security Forums

The ISSA Regional Social Security Forums offer members access to the most important regional gatherings of CEOs and senior social security administrators, social security ministers and policy-makers as well as representatives of international organizations.

The Regional Forums not only provide unique opportunities for senior level networking and technical exchange on key regional challenges in social security policy and administration, but also highlight the important role that social security plays for economic and social development in the various regional contexts. Regional Social Security Forums will be held in Africa, the Americas, Europe, and Asia and the Pacific respectively during the triennium. All Forums are organized by the Secretariat in collaboration with the host organization and the ISSA regional structures. Programme highlights include a session on developments and trends, technical and interactive sessions on excellence in social security administration as well as on priority social security challenges, and the Regional Social Security Summits.

Expected outputs:

1. Regional Social Security Forum for Africa to take place in the second half of 2017;
2. Regional Social Security Forum for the Americas to take place in 2018;
3. Regional Social Security Forum for Asia and the Pacific to take place in 2018;
4. Regional Social Security Forum for Europe to take place in 2019.

3.3 ISSA International Conferences for Social Security Professionals

As the global pole for knowledge on social security administration, the ISSA offers member institutions access to a number of unique International Conferences for Social Security Professionals.

Featuring high-level technical discussions on the latest developments and innovations in key, the ISSA conferences for social security professionals provide unique learning, exchange and networking opportunities for the senior management and technical staff of member institutions. By integrating external expertise in the conferences, they also allow member representatives to benefit from close exchanges with, for instance, actuarial specialists, representatives of the ICT industry or experts in occupational safety and health. Reflecting the positive feedback received by member institutions as regards the ISSA professional conferences, it is proposed to expand the topical scope covered by these events.

The ISSA international conferences for social security professionals are organized by the General Secretariat in close collaboration with the concerned ISSA Technical Commissions.

Expected outputs:

1. World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, organized jointly with the ILO, to take place in 2017;
2. International Conference on Information and Communication Technology in Social Security, to take place in 2018;
3. International Conference for Social Security Actuaries, Statisticians and Investment specialists, to take place in 2018;
4. International Conference on Research and Innovation in Social Security; to take place in 2018.

4. Partnership development

Partnership development will strengthen the ISSA's reputation and capacity to promote social security, and thereby offer members support in their efforts to enhance their institutional development and social security schemes.

Partnerships with international and regional organizations and other stakeholders, including industry players are an important basis for allowing the ISSA to achieve its objective to promote social security at both international and national levels, including in particular the extension and maintenance of social security coverage. Strengthened political commitment and increased recognition of the need for appropriate investment in administrative and implementation capacities are important concrete benefits for members resulting from this ISSA activity.

The practical and impact-oriented services now provided by the ISSA facilitate interactions with stakeholders as they show more clearly the particular value of engaging with the ISSA. This activity will leverage on this increased potential for the ISSA to strengthen its role in international fora and as part of national projects carried out by international and domestic actors. In some cases, this may also lead to the raising of extrabudgetary resources for ISSA or member-driven projects. The recognition by national and international actors of the ISSA Guidelines will in this context be an important objective.

A special focus will be on further strengthening the programmatic relations with the ILO, and to develop closer collaboration with the World Bank, the EU and regional institutions. The collaboration of the ISSA and the ILO brings together complementary knowledge and services, and thereby has an important potential for achieving real progress towards extending and sustaining social security.

Expected outputs:

1. The development and implementation of a partnership programme with international and national stakeholders to ensure broad recognition of ISSA Guidelines and define valuable activities for ISSA members;
2. Joint actions with the ILO and other key international actors to promote and facilitate the implementation of social security programmes.

5. ISSA communication, publications and web portal

5.1 ISSA communications coordination

ISSA communications coordination ensures the capacity that allows the ISSA to offer members effective information and communication as well as to promote social security at the international level.

A strong communication and promotion capacity is indispensable for the ISSA to effectively communicate with members and to highlight the key role of social security. Upgrading the ISSA communication and promotion capacity has been a major focus during the past years, exemplified by the full implementation of e-alerts and an integrated MyISSA web environment facilitating communication between the ISSA and member institutions during the triennium 2014-2016.

Member information activities and promotion for ISSA products, services and events continue to be an important task for ISSA communication, including the preparation of promotion material, the coordination of the ISSA corporate image and the production of the *ISSA Annual Review*. In addition, the capacities developed during the past years will be further expanded to ensure the necessary communication support to a pro-active member engagement strategy. In this context, the development of more targeted communication approaches in line with the expressed preferences and needs of each user and member organization will be one of the priority development areas.

Finally, an important development focus will be on strengthening the capacity of the ISSA to build member communities by facilitating the sharing of up-to-date information and news between member institutions, e.g. on policy reforms, management changes etc. The objective of this new development will increase the benefits that members can reach from being a member of the unique network the ISSA represents.

Expected outputs:

1. Coordination of the ISSA corporate image and the definition and implementation of ISSA communication standards and rules;
2. Communication and promotion activities for ISSA products, events and services;
3. Integrated ISSA institutional news system that informs the management and staff of member institutions of the activities of the ISSA General Secretariat, Technical Commissions and regional structures as well as news from other member institutions;
4. Facilitated member-to-member communication and sharing of experiences through effective tools;
5. Three *Annual Reviews* in seven languages.

5.2 ISSA publications coordination

ISSA publications coordination ensures the capacity of the ISSA to offer members access to relevant and quality publications.

This activity coordinates the editing, translation and production of ISSA publications, including in particular the various web-versions of the ISSA Guidelines and the related sources and learning products. Through the development of tailored knowledge and services according to the interests of each member institution rather than standardized publications, the ISSA publications coordination will further ensure that ISSA publications can form the basis for developing short and easily accessible outputs focussed on the specific priorities of each member institution.

Expected output:

1. Coordination, editing and production of all ISSA publications.

5.3 ISSA web portal

The ISSA web portal launched at the World Social Security Forum 2013 is an integrated information platform that provides members with access to ISSA's knowledge and services in several languages and that supports exclusiveness and member relations through a member-only space.

This activity provides the resources necessary for maintaining and developing the ISSA web portal, which is the on-line environment of the ISSA Centre for Excellence and provides access to the ISSA social security country profiles as well as ISSA research and innovation products and related micro sites. Through the alert system integrated with the ISSA CRM and the “My ISSA” personalized spaces, the web portal also constitutes a primary communication channel with member institutions. In addition, event administration and registration is being implemented through the portal.

In addition to the further consolidation and maintenance of the web portal, its content will be reviewed to facilitate access to the expanded Centre for Excellence content and services, including improvements in navigation and selective access to guidelines-related knowledge, as well as to appropriately support the new member engagement and communication strategy. Key developments in this regard relate to structuring information according to member priorities and interests, building the on-line capacities for improved targeting and user-driven communication between the ISSA and members as well as collaboration between members, and facilitate the implementation of an appropriate e-learning environment around the ISSA Guidelines.

Expected outputs:

1. ISSA web portal in seven languages including a public space and an exclusive member space “My ISSA”;
2. Coordination of web portal content sourced from various ISSA activities;
3. Support to users of the web portal, including the users of the “My ISSA” space.

6. General management, programme development and official relations

6.1 General management

General management ensures members that the Secretary General is in the position to carry out his functions, and in particular provide leadership to the effective and efficient implementation of the Programme and Budget.

In line with the ISSA Constitution, the ISSA Secretary General manages the General Secretariat in order to ensure the cost-effective implementation of the ISSA Programme and Budget and the decisions and instructions of the ISSA statutory bodies. He leads the strategic development of the ISSA and the development of relations with member institutions, potential members and partners and advises the other ISSA Officers. The Secretary General also assures the overall relevance and quality of the ISSA products and services in line with the ISO quality management system (certification ISO 9001) and is the spokesperson and representative of the ISSA General Secretariat.

Expected outputs:

1. Manage and direct the activities of the Association as a whole and, in particular, the operation of the ISSA General Secretariat (*Article 39* of the ISSA Constitution);
2. Efficient implementation of the Programme and Budget to the satisfaction of ISSA members;
3. Progress reports on programme implementation on the occasion of each meeting of the ISSA Bureau;
4. A medium-term report on programme implementation to the ISSA Bureau in 2018;

5. An activities report 2017-2019 to the ISSA General Assembly on the occasion of the World Social Security Forum 2019;
6. Preparation of programme proposals, and support to the Treasurer in the preparation of budget proposals for the triennium 2020-2022; a Programme and Budget 2020-2022 for adoption by the ISSA Council on the occasion of the World Social Security Forum 2019.

6.2 Programme, regional structures and Technical Commission coordination

This activity offers members a responsive, coherent and integrated approach to ISSA programme development and implementation, including in particular the development of the ISSA regional structures and Technical Commissions as well as their integrated work planning.

This coordination covers all ISSA delivery structures including the General Secretariat, the Technical Commissions and regional structures. It includes the preparation of work plans for these structures and appropriate tools to follow the implementation of programmed activities. This activity also supports the Secretary General in his reporting on programme implementation to the ISSA Bureau and the ISSA General Assembly and in the preparation of a Programme and Budget 2020-2022, including through the implementation of a member survey in 2018.

The ISSA Technical Commissions carry out the technical oversight of the content of the ISSA Guidelines and support the services of the ISSA Centre for Excellence through expert knowledge and advice. Reviewing the eight ISSA Guidelines launched in 2013 as well as the production of additional Guidelines will be important priorities for Technical Commissions. Some Commissions will also contribute to ISSA research and innovation through implementing, or participating in, studies related to key priority areas for innovation in social security policy and administration.

The 17 ISSA regional structures constitute pillars for member exchanges on practical experiences and innovations at the regional level and host the programme of ISSA Academy workshops. In addition to maintaining and further developing the capacities of this unique networking platforms, their contribution to the ISSA Centre for Excellence will be strengthened through a better coordination of regional seminar topics with the topical areas of current and future ISSA Guidelines and improved integration of the knowledge presented at regional activities into the knowledge base of the Centre. Finally, regional structures will play an important role in strengthening member engagement and communication.

Expected outputs:

1. Coordination of programme development and implementation;
2. Implementation of a member survey measuring the performance of the ISSA in providing relevant and quality services as well as the impact of ISSA activities at member level during 2018;
3. The maintenance and development of ISSA regional structures and coordination of the establishment of work plans for each of these structures, including the organizations of a series of Technical Seminars;
4. The establishment and implementation of a work plan for each Technical Commission.
5. Three ISSA Forums of Technical Commissions to take place in 2017, 2018 and 2019 respectively in Geneva, Switzerland.

6.3 Statutory bodies and institutional relations with member institutions

This activity ensures members that the ISSA General Secretariat has the appropriate resources to support the activities of the ISSA statutory bodies and ISSA officers and to ensure good governance through the full compliance with applicable ISSA rules and regulations.

Pursuing good governance of the Association, the ISSA General Secretariat supports the activities of the ISSA statutory bodies including the General Assembly, the Council and the Bureau and its committees through the smooth organization of their meetings, and assists the ISSA Officers in carrying out their duties. A continued focus will be on ensuring that all ISSA rules and regulations including in particular those of the ISSA Constitution and the ISSA Good Governance Charter are respected. Specific attention will be paid to ensuring the timely submission of documents to the statutory bodies.

This activity also ensures the institutional relations with ISSA member institutions concerning their administrative relationship with the ISSA, their membership status as well as their statutory roles in the ISSA governance. It thereby safeguards that the ISSA membership and statutory contact data is up-to-date and that the necessary statutory roles are being taken up.

Expected outputs:

1. Six meetings of the ISSA Bureau;
2. Three meetings of the ISSA Nominations Committee;
3. One meeting of the ISSA Council on the occasion of the World Social Security Forum 2019;
4. One meeting of the ISSA General Assembly on the occasion of the World Social Security Forum 2019;
5. Publication of a revised ISSA Constitution based on the decision of the ISSA General Assembly on the occasion of the World Social Security Forum 2016;
6. Administration of institutional relations between the ISSA and member institutions.

7. Resources and internal services

This activity ensures members that the ISSA General Secretariat has the appropriate resources to ensure administrative and IT support as well as financial governance and quality management (certification ISO 9001).

Resources and internal services provides the administrative support services in the Secretariat including human resources management and development, information technology applications and support, finance and accounting, mail and distribution. It makes a key contribution to the implementation of the quality management system (certification ISO 9001) and risk management. It supports the ISSA Treasurer and the Control Commission in carrying out their statutory roles and responsibilities. Efforts to strengthen efficiency will be continued with the objective to reduce general administration costs.

Expected outputs:

1. Maintenance of ISO 9001 certification of the ISSA;
2. Financial and human resource management of the Association;
3. Audited yearly accounts and support to the Treasurer in the preparation of financial reporting to the ISSA Bureau;
4. Support to the ISSA Control Commission.

Promoting excellence in social security
Promouvoir l'excellence dans la sécurité sociale
Promoviendo la excelencia en la seguridad social
Förderung von Exzellenz in der sozialen Sicherheit
За повышение стандартов в социальном обеспечении

促进卓越的社会保障
دعم التميّز في الضمان الاجتماعي